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SECRETS OF MODERN SPYING

BY

“VIGILANT”

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CHAPTER I

THE RULES OF THE GAME

According to Nuttall's Standard Dictionary a spy is a person sent into an enemy's camp to watch and report what is going on. To accomplish such missions he must set out in a disguise that conceals his identity and nationality.

The word 'spy' has an unpleasant sound in many ears; to his profession is attached a stigma that often causes him to be despised by the masters he serves. For instance, Napoleon steadfastly refused to honour his famous spy, Schulmeister, with any order or distinction, although he paid him a princely salary.

This is a wrong attitude of mind; the spy who goes alone into the enemy's camp, where the mispronunciation of a word or ignorance of some trivial custom may betray him, deserves as well of his country as the soldier who serves it in the field. But the prejudice exists, and in official circles the spy is generally designated by some more euphemistic term, such as an 'Intelligence Agent,' and when he is sent abroad, he undertakes a 'secret mission.'

He is, therefore, part and parcel of a select corps known as the 'Intelligence Service' (French: Deuxième Bureau de l'Etat-Major; German: Nachrichtendienst), which exists for the purpose of gaining information likely to be serviceable in time of war.

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All spying is Intelligence, but not all Intelligence is spying. If the French or German Admiralty buys a copy of "Jane's Fighting Ships," the annual publication that gives much information concerning the fleets of every country, it procures 'Intelligence.' Some time before the war certain newspapers professed alarm concerning the activities of German spies supposed to be travelling up and down the Eastern Counties, noting the lie of the roads, the sites of bridges, the names and addresses of provision merchants, horse-dealers, etc., in short procuring information that might be of service to a German army invading Britain. A German officer of high rank on a visit to this country was asked by a journalist to give his views on the matter.

"If we need that sort of information," he replied, "we don't send spies to get it. We can buy a Kelly's directory and a motoring map." Much information, therefore, which the public imagines to be procured by spies, is available to anyone purchasing the hand-books that contain it. During the siege of Paris in the Franco-German war of 1870, an irate crowd hailed to a police station an unfortunate military officer accused of selling to the Prussians the plans of the city's fortifications. In their unreasoning fury, begotten of panic, one and all ignored the fact that these plans were published in a booklet on sale at every bookseller's shop in Paris.

To the embassies of most countries are appointed military and naval attachés, who may be described as legitimate spies, for the attaché's duty is to acquire all possible information about the fighting forces of the country to which he is accredited. Much of this is gleaned from available publications; also, every autumn, the military attaché attends the army manœuvres of the country in question. Along with

Sometimes the attaché exceeds his official instructions. Colonel Bassaroff, the Russian military attaché at Berlin before the war, was discovered to be involved in a case of espionage where several German warrant officers were bribed to procure the plans of frontier fortresses. In such cases the injured party makes representations which lead to the prompt recall of the offender; from his chiefs he receives a public rebuke for excess of zeal and a private hint that promotion awaits him as soon as the trouble has blown over.

In times of peace consuls are under instruction to gather information about the commercial and economic affairs of the country in which they work. Most of it they procure from openly published handbooks of statistics, but on occasion a consul acquires valuable titbits of news that are not supposed to become public property. If it subsequently leaks out that he has used undue influence to gain them, he is likewise recalled, and receives with his official reproof the hint that his faithful services will be duly rewarded.

Official personages may, therefore, spy in time of peace to their hearts' content. They are indeed expected to do so, and the only penalty for detection is removal to another (and usually more lucrative) post.

In war there is also much Intelligence work that is not spying. The officer conducting a reconnaissance or occupying a listening post acquires Intelligence of

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the enemy's movements, but he does not spy. Neither does the aviator who photographs the enemy's positions from the air.

The scout who creeps into the enemy's lines in quest of information is not a spy if he wears his military uniform. In short, any soldier may adopt what methods he pleases to gain information and still be entitled to the treatment of a prisoner of war if captured, provided that he wears his regular uniform. In the wars of the Napoleonic and earlier periods, when armies were composed of contingents from many lands, coats of all colours were to be found in every camp; this gave the skilled gleaner of information a real advantage, for on occasions he could march boldly into the enemy's camp, and the odds were ten to one that somewhere in the opposing forces there was a regiment with a uniform not unlike his own. If he could pass himself off as belonging to it, he was perfectly entitled to do so and still be treated as a prisoner of war.

This similarity of uniform often led to confusion on the battlefield. The French plans at the battle of Fuentes-de-Onoro in the Peninsular War suffered a severe check at a critical moment because a red-coated Hannoverian regiment in French service was mistaken by other French troops for a British regiment. The French General in command of a forward position thought he was surrounded and retreated, and the mistake proved irretrievable.

But to-day the soldier fights in a sober garb which is nevertheless distinctive; the wearer of a field-grey uniform would have no chance of escaping recognition in British lines. The seeker after information in the enemy's camp must therefore don the enemy's uniform or civilian clothes, and if caught in them he is liable to be shot as a spy. On the other hand

The civilian in country occupied by the enemy is also liable by the laws of war to be shot as a spy if he attempts to observe the invader's movements and transmit Intelligence of them to his own side. "Thou shalt not serve thy country in times of war by word or deed unless thou wearest her uniform" is the ruling that seals the detected spy's doom.

In peace-time the spy caught in a foreign country is not executed, but receives a long term of imprisonment. Until a few years before the war he was even immune from this penalty in England, because there was no law on the Statute Book to deal with his case. After several spies were detected, the "Official Secrets Act" was passed, under which any spy taken red-handed duly finds his way to prison, where he receives exactly the same treatment as all other offenders against the country's laws. In Germany, on the contrary, an elaborate code existed for many years before the war, which meted out penal servitude to the traitor or the spy seeking information for his own gain, but allowed honorable imprisonment in a fortress to a foreign officer executing a secret mission in his country's service. This milder form of captivity was accorded to Captain Trench and Lieutenant Brandon, two British officers, who spied in Germany about four or five years before the war.

But theoretically no nation spies on another in times of peace. Should one of its Intelligence Agents be

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caught, a statement is issued to the effect that the culprit was not employed in any official capacity, and some governments even go so far as to assert that they possess no Intelligence Services. In the case of a detected naval or military officer, the correct formula states that he undertook the act of espionage on his own responsibility while on leave and will be dismissed as soon as he returns home after his imprisonment. These polite disavowals deceive no one.

In war all detected spies are liable to the death penalty, and by a strange irony of fate the patriotic spy, acting from the best motives, comes off worst, for, mindful of his country's interests, he refuses to answer all questions put to him by his captors. The spy who is merely out for profit often has a chance to save his life by giving information that betrays his associates and employers. He may even regain his liberty by entering the service of the country that holds him prisoner, as did several Russian spies captured by the Germans.

The German spy, Armgard Karl Graves, who was sentenced to eighteen months hard labour at Edinburgh in 1912, obtained release after serving a few weeks of his sentence by volunteering his services to Britain. On the other hand the German ex-naval officer, Hans Lody, the first spy executed in London during the war, made no other defence at his court-martial than that he had undertaken his dangerous mission to serve his country. The death-sentence was passed reluctantly, and still more reluctantly executed.

For sentimental reasons most governments are averse to the execution of women spies, though several were shot by both sides during the recent war. When a group of spies is captured, their judges usually make a distinction between the ringleaders and subordinates, as some of the latter are often dupes or tools, with

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little realisation of the gravity of their offence. They therefore escape with sentences of imprisonment in order to spare their captors the necessity of the *exécution en masse* which always had a revolting effect.

The best type of Intelligence Service only employs its own nationals for regular work. These are picked men and women, whose characters are above suspicion, and who may be counted on to resist bribes from the other side. Some are military and naval officers whose technical knowledge plus a gift for languages and a talent for acquiring information causes them to be withdrawn from their normal employment and lent to Intelligence. Others are civilians who drift into their hazardous profession by devious routes. All are on a regular salary list, as the "payment by results" principle must necessarily lead to exaggerated and untrue reports from agents anxious to increase their earnings.

On the other hand the governments of all nations are liable to be approached by "free lances" with information to sell to the highest bidder. If it is considered worth purchase, a lump sum down is paid, but such transactions are often the cause of subsequent disappointment to the buyer.

Valuable information is often to be had from deserters, who sell military and naval information to gain enough money to start new lives in the country of their refuge. Before the war the iron discipline and severe conditions of German military service was the cause of many desertions, and the fugitives generally made their way into France. The French Intelligence Service made a point of getting in touch with these deserters. German-speaking officers were detailed to interview them, and if any showed signs of being able to impart information of a particularly interesting nature, he was sent to the French War Office and

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subjected to an exhaustive interrogation, after which he received a payment commensurate with the value of his statements. Occasionally such payment was coupled with an offer of regular employment in the French Intelligence Service.

Some free lances offer their exclusive services to a particular country for a term of years, but, however efficient this type of 'international spy' may be, he frequently does more harm than good to his employer, for when caught he has no patriotic motives to restrain his tongue. He makes the best bargain he can with his captors, whose service he sometimes enters. In such cases the news of his capture is suppressed, and he is supplied with false information to pass on to his original masters, whose secrets he must then ferret out. The international spy finds this procedure peculiarly agreeable, as it enables him to draw pay from both parties; he thus becomes a 'double spy.'

In the spy game the rule that no man can serve two masters therefore finds its exception, and many international spies engage in double spying when under no compulsion to do so. A typical example of this variety was Karl Zievert, a Russian subject of German origin, who was employed in the Russian Okhrana (Secret Political Police) and rose to a high position in their censorship bureau at Kieff. He was in receipt of salaries from the German and Austrian Intelligence Services as a secret agent and enlisted the assistance of many of his subordinates, who likewise figured on the pay-rolls of the two Foreign Powers. If, as sometimes occurred, they attempted to blackmail him, he denounced them to his Russian superiors, with the result that they invariably ended their careers in Siberian prisons. His achievements were equalled by the Serbian, Krivosh, who was at one time attached to General Brusiloff's Intelligence Staff and used the

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opportunities of his position to convey secret information to the German and Austrian military authorities. The international spy can never be trusted, and the best Intelligence Services do not engage foreigners in times of peace, though necessity often compels them to use them in war.

The unfortunate individual known as the 'fool-spy' often escapes the death penalty, as is only just. The fool-spy is a person whose talents are insufficient for his vocation or whose loyalty becomes suspected; he is therefore sent on a mission where detection is inevitable and capture certain. Meanwhile, unknown to him, a skilled and trusted spy undertakes a mission in the same locality, the theory being that the enemy's counterspies will be put off the scent by the capture of the fool-spy so that the genuine agent can pursue his operations unmolested. Such a type was Joseph Marks, a business man of Aachen, who was enlisted in the German Intelligence Service in the recent war and sent to England. He was so clumsy that he betrayed himself almost as soon as he landed and, to his great relief, was sent to spend the rest of the war in an internment camp.

A 'letter-box' is a person who receives the reports of agents residing in a foreign country and forwards them to headquarters. On August 5th, 1914, the British police arrested Karl Gustav Ernst, a barber of German origin, but born in London, who collected reports from twenty-two German agents in England and despatched them to Berlin. The German Intelligence Service had been in the habit of sending Ernst the instructions for these spies in packets, leaving it to him to forward the individual letters to the proper recipients.

Spies residing in a foreign country often work on the principle known in France as the 'closed cell'

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(*cellule cloisonné*), according to which no agent knows the identity or scope of operations of his colleagues, so that he is unable to betray them if caught. But the names and addresses of all are known by their letter-box, so that when a residential spy is 'spotted,' it often proves advisable to refrain from arresting him for a while. By shadowing his movements the police can trace him to his letter-box, with the satisfactory result that a whole group of spies are ultimately captured. It may surprise some readers to learn that many spies never go into the enemy's land during war, as their missions can be conveniently performed from neutral countries. Before the war the Intelligence Services of all Great Powers established outposts in countries which they expected to remain neutral in the event of a European conflagration. Thus France watched Germany from Intelligence Bureaus in Geneva, Luxemburg and Brussels, while Britain pushed out tentacles from London to Spa, Brussels, Rotterdam and Copenhagen. During the war Britain and Germany made much use of Norway and Denmark as vantage points to spy on each other's movements, while Germany and Russia watched one another from Sweden.

Prior to 1914 the military and naval movements of the potential enemy were the chief objects of survey, but the geographical positions of the belligerents rendered the British blockade one of the decisive factors of the war. The Central Powers, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey, formed a compact block almost entirely surrounded by a ring of foes and were therefore in the position of a besieged garrison that might be defeated by either starvation or direct assault. The neutral countries, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Switzerland, and, for a time, Italy, Greece and

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Rumania, were outlets through which the beleaguered Central Powers might procure food and raw materials or improve their finances by trading such goods as the exigencies of war permitted them to manufacture. Consequently commercial Intelligence came to be almost as important as naval and military Intelligence, and Britain employed many agents whose entire vigilance was devoted to surveying the commercial activities of our opponents and transmitting information that would lead to a tightening of the stranglehold of the blockade. It was also due to the skill of these agents that Britain acquired the secret processes by which Germany's aniline dyes and optical glasses were manufactured, information which proved extremely valuable to the conduct of the war.

The commercial spy's work must inevitably be performed in neutral countries which the enemy intends to use as a passage for his imports and exports, but a large amount of military and naval spying also takes place in them. Their citizens visit the enemy's country for business and other reasons, so that useful information can be gained from them by judicious 'pumping.' The enemy's embassies and legations in neutral lands must also be objects of intensive espionage.

During the war enemy subjects visiting neutral countries were naturally potential sources of information for an alert agent. In such cases the spy often posed as a pacifist who had taken refuge in a neutral land to avoid conscription; if he found his subject was not too ardent a patriot he could win his heart and set his tongue flowing by preaching internationalism and universal brotherhood. If, however, the subject was convinced of his own country's good cause, the agent often found it good policy to let himself be converted, whereupon the subject, pleased to have won over a member of an enemy race, began

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to boast of his country's prowess and resources, and thus let fall much interesting information.

Another good pose for a spy was that of a member of a subjected and oppressed race. Germany, Austria and Russia all made much use of Poles for spying, because the fact that Poland was then partitioned between those three powers made it feasible for a Pole to regard any one of them as his main oppressor. It was easy for a Russian Pole to persuade Germans that he was yearning for delivery from the Tsarist yoke, while an inhabitant of Posen found no difficulty in convincing Russians that he writhed beneath the heel of the Prussian jack-boot. Several German spies established themselves securely in France by posing as Alsatians, and one of Britain's cleverest spies was a Hindu. This gentleman played the part of a champion of Home-rule for India so successfully that he obtained permission to reside in Berlin during the war, where he was made much of. Coming into contact with many prominent personages who were anxious to learn his views on the situation in India and the possibilities of fomenting rebellion there, he contrived to transmit much useful information, but eventually fell under suspicion and made his way into a neutral country a few hours before a warrant for his arrest was issued.

As every neutral country must be regarded as a potential belligerent that circumstances may force to side with one or other party, its military and naval forces are also objects of espionage. There is also the danger of its neutrality being so benevolent towards one side that it allows it secret facilities that it does not grant to the other. The minor harbours and sheltered bays of neutrals showing undue friendship to Germany were carefully watched by Entente agents for this reason, as a neutral land that gave secret shelter to German submarines in search of quiet bases

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where they could replenish their stores might naturally prove the indirect cause of untold damage to Allied shipping.

Switzerland, Holland, Spain and the Scandinavian countries passed laws which enabled them to afflict with severe terms of imprisonment any agent of either party found prying into the secrets of their defences. Neutral countries also penalised spies exercising their profession in favour of any one belligerent against any other, but did not always mete out full punishment to the culprits they caught. Often they were content to expel them from their territories.

A 'counter-spy' is an Intelligence Agent detailed to keep watch on the movement of enemy spies. His activities are mainly confined to his own country, though sometimes circumstances take him to the enemy's land, where, if caught, he suffers the same fate as a spy. In neutral countries he finds many opportunities, and though liable to penalties if detected, he is often secretly tolerated as at any moment he may render a service to the land in which he is working. The German spy, Kohr, who was convicted in Switzerland and sentenced to imprisonment, owed his downfall mainly to the work done by Entente agents watching him, for while endeavouring to trace the scope of his operations in France, they incidentally stumbled on the discovery that he had tried to procure plans of the Gotthard defences. This information they passed on to the Swiss authorities, with the result that Kohr was speedily laid by the heels.

During the war the French Intelligence service established a clever counter-spy as a passport official on the German frontier at Basel. Within a few hours of their arrival from Germany, the names and descriptions of all persons who entered Switzerland at his post were forwarded to the French Intelligence

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Bureau at Geneva, and several spies were arrested at Annemasse when they attempted to enter France, as a result of his vigilance. On the whole counter-espionage demands even more skill than actual spying, for whereas the spy scores his main successes against unsuspecting victims the counterspy is engaged in a ceaseless struggle against opponents who are constantly on the alert and only to be unmasked by superior skill.

The counter-spy must also suspect the people with whom he works, as any of them may be enemy spies. The spy who can worm his way into the opposite side's counter-espionage service has a wonderful opportunity, though readers may wonder how he can contrive to earn the reputation of smartness and yet take care to shield his own country's spies from capture. This difficulty is not, however, so great as it superficially appears, for his headquarters will arrange to throw a few fool-spies in his way, and he can also run down any of his own side's men whom he finds guilty of treachery or double spying, thus saving his military authorities the cost of powder and shot to execute them. A few such captures will build him up a reputation that cannot easily be impaired. But sometimes a really Gilbertian situation occurs, for the faked counterspy receives orders to track down a mysterious and very effective spy who has baffled the resources of all his colleagues. He is, in fact, ordered to catch himself, and must contrive to fail without losing prestige. This actually occurred several times during the war, and in each case the pseudo-counterspy emerged from the ordeal with his reputation unscathed.

It must, however, be urged in favour of the spy that when he goes into the enemy's camp, he usually plays a lone hand, whereas the counterspy, working mainly in his own or an allied country, can count on valuable

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assistance from the police. When this implies the co-operation of forces such as the C.I.D. of Scotland Yard or the French Sûreté, it is help that even the cleverest agent cannot afford to despise.

When a spy is captured, the arrest is effected by the police, civilian or military, as the case may be. In occupied Belgium the Germans established a service of military police to deal with the Belgian spies, but Lody and other German spies taken in England were arrested by the local police at the instance of Scotland Yard acting on evidence furnished by counter-spies. They were then handed over to the military authorities for trial by courtmartial.

The *métiers* of espionage and counter-espionage are often interchanged, for an expert in one branch benefits by gaining experience of the other. A spy returning from a mission abroad is usually put on counter-espionage work for a period if there is reason to believe that the other side are on his tracks; he thus has an opportunity of keeping his hand in while lying low until such time as he can safely venture forth once more.

These are roughly the rules and customs of the spy-game, a knowledge of which will enable the reader to fully appreciate the movements of the dark pieces on the vast chess-board of the recent war and the new board set out after the Treaty of Versailles.

CHAPTER II

COMING EVENTS

In July, 1911, the Naval Review held at Portsmouth in honour of the coronation of King George V. attracted many visitors. In the narrow straits between the Hampshire coast and the Isle of Wight lay countless British warships of all classes and descriptions, side by side with others that flew foreign ensigns, for every seafaring nation, great or small, had sent a ship to represent its country at the review in honour of Britain's Sailor King.

The holiday-makers of Southsea stared curiously at the sailormen who strolled about in twos and threes on the long Parade during their free hours. They were all so alike, and yet so different.

All wore dark blue uniforms, of much the same sort of cloth, with the same loose blouses and sloppy trousers. Most of them had the same round caps, though the red fezzes of the men representing the Turkish Navy made a vivid splash amid the monotony of 'navy blue,' and all complexions were of that self-same tan that tinges the cheeks of those who spend their lives on great waters.

But once past these superficial details, what contrasts could be observed ! There were the squat little figures of Japanese, side by side with the giant forms of blonde Swedes and Norwegians, descendants of the vikings who invaded our shores a thousand years

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ago, there were vivacious men with red tassels on their caps, our neighbours and allies from across the Channel, and there were lean, swarthy men with unsailorlike moustaches and earrings in their ears, crews of South American navies sent across thousands of ocean miles for this one special occasion.

But the smart bearing of the delegates sent by Wilhelm II., Emperor of Germany, attracted all eyes. The ribbons on their caps proclaimed them as members of the crew of S.M.S. Von der Tann, Germany's latest battle-cruiser.

The holiday-makers of Southsea indulged in cruises promoted by the pleasure-steamers that wormed their way in and out of the long lines of warships gathered together to do honour to King George V. It was the proper thing to do and when, they asked themselves, would such a unique opportunity occur again?

Like *tout le monde* I made the round and, though completely ignorant of the technique of naval armaments, I could not help admiring the clean-cut efficient outlines of Germany's Von der Tann as our steamer puffed past her. Murmurs of involuntary admiration broke from my fellow-passengers and then a voice behind me prophesied in cheerful Cockney:

"S'pose we'll be fightin' 'er one of these days!"

Coming events cast their shadows before them.

That same evening I went to the theatre in company of a friend who once held a commission in the British Navy.

"She'll be a tough nut to crack," he said, when I related him my impression of the Von der Tann. "A very tough nut if the day ever comes. I'd give anything for a chance to go over her."

But unknown to either of us the same idea had occurred to the Sea Lords who rule the destinies of the British Admiralty. Our scene therefore changes

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from English Portsmouth, in Hampshire, to German Portsmouth, which is Wilhelmshaven at the east end of the Frisian coast.

It is not so attractive a place as English Portsmouth, because it has no Southsea to amuse and divert holiday-makers. It is a strictly business-like naval base, and, apart from the officers and men of the German fleet, its sole population consists of its dock-yard workers, the officials who direct their activities and the tradesmen who cater for them. Sightseers are rare in Wilhelmshaven.

At the same time we must note that the pre-war German policeman was poorly paid. After serving a regulation number of years, German army N.C.O.'s and naval P.O.'s had a right to civilian employment under government, but as the police force offered the lowest wage and the poorest prospects, it naturally had to be content with the inferior types of time-expired warrant officers. Even in our British police force, justly reputed the best of its kind in the world, there are occasional black sheep, and the scanty remuneration that the Imperial German Police paid to its recruits naturally saddled it with not a few 'wrong 'uns.' This state of affairs was known to the British Intelligence Service.

One evening, therefore, P.C.s Glauss and Jaenicke of the Wilhelmshaven police force were patrolling a suburban boat. Their way lay past a house surrounded by a large garden, but they failed to notice a tall, burly man smoking in its doorway until he sauntered down the garden path and accosted them with the statement that he desired to give them some information concerning a recent burglary that had baffled the police. Strangely enough, neither constable's face showed the enthusiasm that every policeman ought to display on such occasions, but after an awkward

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pause Glauss slowly extracted pencil and notebook and enquired the names of the malefactors.

The reply caused an outburst of abuse, coupled with threats of prosecution for libellous insults against the police. To this the stranger listened unmoved, and when he at length suggested that the business could be discussed more advantageously under his roof, the bluster subsided and the two constables followed him. What subsequently transpired remains unclear, but two facts emerge from a mass of conflicting evidence.

(1) The stranger, whose name seems to have been Petersen, was an excellent photographer, and the possessor of a powerful camera. (2) Jaenicke and Glauss were two of the 'wrong 'uns' in the Imperial German police, for Petersen showed them a photograph of a courtyard by night, with themselves descending from a window of the burgled house. Both figures and the locality were unmistakable.

But apparently the tender-hearted Petersen, in addition to promising that they would hear nothing further about the burglary, was kind enough to supplement their meagre pay so that their feet need wander no more from the straight path of duty, for about a week later P.C. Jaenicke displayed unwonted affluence when he spent an evening in company with his friend, Signalling Petty Officer Ehlers of S.M.S. Von der Tann, Germany's latest battle-cruiser. He entertained him at a smart restaurant, and they washed down their meal with champagne, afterwards proceeding to an expensive music-hall for which Jaenicke had bought seats. Ehlers could no longer conceal his curiosity, for the constable, a married man with several children, had hard work to make ends meet and was constantly in debt.

An unexpected windfall, Jaenicke explained, a legacy

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from an uncle who went to America many years ago. He had almost forgotten his existence till the lawyer's letter came, but the dollars were real enough, and if Ehlers would like a share of them to buy his trousseau, he could have it. Into the amazed petty officer's hand Jaenicke thrust a wad of notes.

Ehlers, it must be explained, was engaged to Jaenicke's sister-in-law, but though the years went by, he never contrived to save sufficient money to furnish a house. He hastened to break the joyful news to his fiancée, and on his next free afternoon they visited a furnishing establishment.

But the lady had extravagant tastes, and the money supplied by Jaenicke did not go far. But as the latter had hinted that there was more if she needed it, she decided to order further furniture on credit and borrow from him when the bills came in. Ehlers agreed, and the result was that he incurred debts of over two thousand marks before he realised what had happened.

Meanwhile Glauss called on a friend employed in the municipal waterworks as a draughtsman and told him that he had made the acquaintance of an engineer who wanted to sell to the town authorities a new pumping apparatus he had invented. To whom should the man apply, he asked, and the draughtsman gave him the name of the chief engineer in charge of the waterworks.

Glauss then enquired whether it would be possible for his friend to see the waterworks plans before interviewing this august personage, so as to gain an idea of the type of question he was likely to be asked. But the draughtsman shook his head; the waterworks, being connected with the naval docks, were a government secret.

The policeman made a wry face. His friend, he

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told the draughtsman, was ready to pay a thousand marks for half an hour's inspection of the plans, which sum they would naturally share between them. Thereupon the draughtsman began to wonder whether any great harm would ensue if he let the plans out of his hands for so short a period; he replied that he would consider the matter, and a few days later Glauss took him to Petersen's house and told him to wait outside while he went in with the plans.

In ten minutes he was out again. His engineer friend, he told the anxious draughtsman, saw at once that his invention would be of no use to the Wilhelmshaven municipality, but as he was a decent fellow, he had paid over the promised money. The draughtsman pocketed his share, and hastened back to restore the precious plans to their safe.

Ehlers' home was furnished, and the wedding day fixed, but his creditors began to press for their money. He, therefore, appealed to Jaenicke, who vowed that two thousand marks were a trifle, and the following day he paid another visit to Petersen, as a result of which he arranged to meet the petty officer in a certain public house and hand him over the money.

The two men passed a merry evening, as Jaenicke paid for copious potations to celebrate the impending wedding. But before they parted he reminded Ehlers that he ought to have an I.O.U. for the loan as a matter of form, and the petty officer, who had drunk deeply from sheer delight at the happy end to his troubles, signed the document thrust under his nose without bothering to look at it.

A fortnight later Ehlers had a rude awakening from his dreams of connubial bliss, for one day a stranger visited him at his newly furnished home, where he spent much of his spare time, and showed him a bill of exchange, duly signed, wherein he pledged himself

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to pay two thousand marks that very day. The stranger, whose name was Petersen, said he had come for his money.

Ehlers was too flabbergasted to reply, and Petersen read the true state of affairs from the blank look on his face. Without further ado he demanded to be shown round the house, for as the petty officer obviously could not pay up, he would have to put the brokers in and sell the furniture. He also hinted that a man who put his name to a bill which he knew he could not honour was a swindler.

Ehlers now recovered sufficient use of his tongue to ask the stranger how he came to be in possession of this unpleasant document, and received the reply that he had bought it from a policeman named Jaenicke. This reassured him somewhat, for although he could not understand why his future brother-in-law had sold the debt to this stranger, he felt sure that he would redeem it for the honour of the family.

But Petersen smiled sadly and asked whether Ehlers was building on the fact that the policeman had recently received a legacy. If so, he would be disappointed, for Jaenicke's inheritance had not proved as large as he anticipated, so that he had run through every penny of it, and a bit more; hence the sale of the debt. "I don't want to be hard on you," he concluded, "but I must have my money."

Ehlers sank back in a chair, and his thoughts ran on suicide, for he felt himself unable to face the shame of informing his fiancée's parents that her future home was to be sold up. He remained motionless long after Petersen left him.

Glauss, calling on an apparently chance visit, roused him from his stupour, and to Glauss he poured out his woes. The policeman's share in the subsequent proceedings was never cleared up, but he appears

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to have undertaken to plead for Ehlers, and actually arranged an interview between him and Petersen, in the course of which the latter once more repeated that he had no desire to be hard on his debtor.

As, however, he was about to leave Wilhelmshaven, he feared to lose his money if he consented to a period of grace. But at last he appeared to relent and suggested that he knew a way by which Ehlers might earn two thousand marks and more if he did not mind a little trouble.

"I'll do anything in reason," vowed the desperate Ehlers, and Petersen straightway proposed that he should procure for a brief inspection the plans and signal book of S.M.S. Von der Tann. He had a friend, an engineer like himself, who had evolved a new type of marine boiler and a patent signalling device, both of which he desired to offer to the German Admiralty if he could be sure of not making himself ridiculous by coming forward with ideas that had been known to the naval experts for the last ten years. If, therefore, Ehlers, who was, he understood, a signaller on board S.M.S. Von der Tann, could supply the inside information that would tell his friend where he stood, the latter would be willing to pay at least three thousand marks for the favour.

But Ehlers was made of sterner stuff than the draughtsman in the waterworks and did not yield till the brokers were actually in his home. Daily Glauss plied him with drink and persuasive argument, and at the last moment he gave in. One evening he accompanied the policeman to Petersen's house, bearing with him the compromising documents, and, like the draughtsman, he was bidden to wait outside while they were examined.

As before, Glauss appeared before the prescribed period had elapsed. Herr Petersen's friend had seen

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all he wanted, he declared, and there were the three thousand marks. Ehlers hastened away with a lighter heart to replace the plans and signal-book, after which he intended to pay off the bailiffs, release his furniture and lead his bride to the altar.

Meanwhile Jaenicke had been active on Petersen's behalf, and one day a certain Suhr, a member of the dockyard police, visited the engineer's villa. Later two clerks from the Admiralty offices made the pilgrimage, but in each case the documents they lent him were returned at the end of ten minutes.

But not so long afterwards a most unpleasant telegram from the German Embassy in London reached Berlin, where it was the subject of hurried, acrimonious conversations, as the upshot of which a trusted member of the German Intelligence Service departed swiftly for England. On his return he confirmed the dismal news telegraphed by the Embassy, namely that the signal-book of the German navy and the plans of S.M.S. Von der Tann, the fastest and most modern battle-cruiser afloat, had been stolen by persons unknown and were now in the possession of the British Admiralty, along with other important secret information.

Even so the accomplices of Petersen (whose name was naturally not Petersen), need not have feared detection had not P.C. Glauss been possessed of an inordinate desire to see life in Paris. When he took his leave he gave out that he was going to spend his holiday with relations in Hamburg, but as soon as he reached that port, he bought himself several new suits of clothes, a large portmanteau and a first-class ticket to Paris. For once in his life he intended to be a gentleman of leisure.

When he visited the dining-car for a meal, by a strange coincidence he was placed at the same table

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as one of the smartest detectives in the German police-force, who was on his way to Paris in search of a noted jewel-thief supposed to be in hiding in the French capital. The observant sleuth-hound at once noticed that Glauss's fine clothes contrasted ill with his rough hands, while the way in which he handled his knife and fork pointed to unfamiliarity with the uses of polite society. Moreover there was something about his bearing that to the detective's practised eye unmistakably proclaimed him a policeman.

The detective wondered, but said nothing. When, however, the train reached the French frontier and its passengers were compelled to alight for the usual customs-house examination, he quietly made his way to the office of the station-police, revealed his identity and asked for help. On the plea of a more prolonged search for contraband Glauss's baggage was removed to an inner room, where the detective went through his belongings.

In the pockets of an old, shabby suit he found what he wanted—identity papers that proved the man to be, as he had surmised, a policeman. Ascertaining also that he was stationed at Wilhelmshaven, he decided to communicate with his superiors, for obviously a constable who could buy new clothes and go off to Paris for a holiday must have other sources of income besides his pay, and it behoved him to enquire whether they were legitimate.

In Paris he enlisted the help of the French police, who arranged to have Glauss unobtrusively shadowed. His watchers reported that he spent money profusely, with the help of a lady of a certain profession, who appeared to be enjoying herself at his expense.

As soon as he returned to duty at Wilhelmshaven Glauss was closely watched, and his associates, Jaenicke, Ehlers and Suhr, the dockyard policeman, were noted

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to be in possession of more money than their positions warranted. It was also observed that Glauss and Jaenicke paid frequent visits to a certain house in a quiet street occupied by an engineer named Petersen who was supposed to be working on an important invention.

But Suhr of the dockyard police had an observant eye, which told him that he was shadowed, whereupon he took fright. One day he failed to report for duty.

Ehlers, Jaenicke and Glauss were promptly arrested, and the signalling petty officer, who had the tenderest conscience of all three, broke down under cross-examination and made a clean breast of his transactions with Petersen.

The police proceeded to the villa in the quiet street and formed a cordon round its grounds. But when they knocked at the door, no one came to open it. They forced their way in and found the house deserted.

When they searched it, they came in due course to an upper room fitted up as a photographic studio. There were powerful arc lamps and a tripod camera of the latest pattern—an apparatus capable of recording an accurate impression of any document submitted to its lens. In a corner of the room they found a bundle of photographs, among which was the print that showed Jaenicke and Glauss entering the brewery premises.

They searched the villa from attic to cellar, and in the latter they made a startling discovery, for behind a crate of empty bottles they came upon the opening to a passage which eventually led them to the cellar of a neighbouring house that had stood empty for several years.

Had they known of this secret passage beforehand they would naturally have watched its other exit, in

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which case they could not have failed to observe a large car standing before the door. They might have even seen it drive off with a woman and three men inside, one of whom they would have recognised as Suhr of the harbour police.

But they did not know, and so they never set eyes on Petersen, whose name was not Petersen. Afterwards, however, they kept a very strict watch on all strangers visiting Wilhelmshaven, for although, as previously remarked, it is the German Portsmouth, it has no Southsea to attract its holidaymakers, and, therefore, visitors to its grimy streets are not bent on innocent pleasures.

Glauss, Jaenicke and Ehlers were sentenced to six, nine and seven years respectively, while a first lieutenant of S.M.S. Von der Tann, whose negligence had enabled Ehlers to purloin the signalbook, received a year's imprisonment in a fortress.

But as these events took place in the year 1910, whereas the coronation of King George V. was celebrated in 1911, the German Admiralty may be credited with a certain sense of practical humour in sending S.M.S. Von der Tann to represent their country in the naval review at Portsmouth.

CHAPTER III

AN OPPOSITE NUMBER

During the late war the management of British counter-espionage was placed in the hands of Brigadier-General Cockerill, some of whose triumphs have been made known to the reading public in other books dealing with the fascinating subject of espionage. But many of his staff's exploits must naturally remain untold ; some, indeed, are so secret that no written record of them was kept, and though here and there a rumour may be whispered, the true version of the most startling exploits will never be revealed.

General Cockerill's men were responsible for the arrest of many spies ; they prevented valuable information from reaching Germany and spread false rumours that frequently led the enemy astray. To estimate their services at their true value, it would be interesting to form an idea of the personality of the man who directed the secret forces against which they contended.

Colonel W. Nicholai, the late Director of Military Intelligence for the German War Office, has written two books dealing with his experiences, and some of his statements will undoubtedly surprise British readers. At the commencement of hostilities, for instance, it was generally believed that England was swarming with German spies, but in reality the Fatherland's agents in this country numbered only 22.

This is a fact that General Cockerill's records will

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confirm. Moreover, all these German agents were known to Scotland Yard, but so unobtrusively were their movements surveyed that all believed themselves undetected. On August 4th, 1914, one of them was seized with a gloomy foreboding; he crossed the Channel and eventually reached Germany, but the others were arrested on August 5th, together with Karl Gustav Ernst, the barber who acted as their letterbox. As a result the German Intelligence Service was temporarily paralysed as far as Great Britain was concerned, so that the landing of the British Expeditionary Force in France came as a complete surprise to the German warlords.

In consequence of this severe blow Germany was compelled to send a number of untrained spies to our shores, men such as the gallant Lody and the adventurous Buschmann, who were detected after a very short period of activity. Most of them met their deaths from the rifles of firing parties in the Tower of London, and it was many months before the Germans succeeded in establishing a reliable information service in England.

For this defeat at the very outset of the war Colonel Nicolai is not to blame. Strange as it may seem, the German Intelligence Service was systematically starved for years, and its able director ought rather to be congratulated on the results he achieved with his scanty resources. When he took up his appointment in May, 1913, not much more than a year before the outbreak of the European conflagration, the funds at his disposal amounted to only 450,000 marks (£22,500) per annum, from which sum he had to pay both his agents in various countries and those engaged on counter-espionage at home.

Most of his agents were well-educated men, who entered the Intelligence service from patriotic motives

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or love of adventure ; there was also one gifted woman, whom a cruel blow drove into the ranks of Germany's secret forces, which she subsequently served with such distinction. So well did these chosen few cover the ground in France that even to-day the French public believes Germany's spies in their country to have been numbered by hundreds instead of mere tens.

But owing to scarcity of funds the German Intelligence Service operated in practically no countries save France and Russia, the neighbours of the western and eastern frontiers. To England went a few special agents, to other lands none. Such was the state of affairs, Colonel Nicolai tells us, when he assumed office.

His knowledge of topography and talent for languages rendered him a suitable man for his post. As a cadet he learnt Russian, in addition to French and English, and when the Russo-Japanese War broke out in 1904 he was studying Japanese in the hope of being sent out as an official military observer of the conflict for the supremacy of the Far East.

His disappointment was keen when he learnt that his name did not figure in the list of officers to be attached to the Japanese General Staff, but a year later his ambitions were fired by the offer of an appointment on Germany's eastern frontier, where he was given the task of rebuilding the German Intelligence Service in Russia, then practically moribund, and organise an effective system of counter-espionage to deal with the hosts of Russian spies that swarmed over the provinces of Posen and East Prussia. His headquarters were fixed at Königsberg, but before he settled down there, he took the opportunity to visit Russia, for although he knew the language well, he had never set foot in the country.

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He has given us some curious details of this trip. He attempted no disguise and made no secret of the fact that he was a German officer holding a staff appointment. But all the Russians with whom he came in contact hinted to him their belief that he was visiting their country for the sole purpose of gathering military information.

In fortified towns his movements were closely watched, but if for purposes of pleasure or sightseeing he visited a city that contained no garrison, the inhabitants whose acquaintance he made were frankly surprised, and in one case he was actually asked what was the object of his visit to a place where, as all the world knew, there were no military secrets for him to ferret out. But in another town (a most important fortress) he received a practical demonstration of the corruption prevalent in Russia, for one of its highest and most respected officials visited him privately, enquired what secret information he wished to obtain and offered his services to procure it.

Colonel Nicolai ascertained that the headquarters of the Russian Intelligence Service were at St. Petersburg, with a special bureau for espionage in Germany at Vilna and another for similar work in Austria at Kieff. A third office in Warsaw served as a liaison between these two sections. The heads of these departments were incompetent and corrupt, but so numerous was the host of spies they employed, so lavish were the funds at their disposal and so feeble were the efforts of the German counter-espionage agents that a considerable amount of valuable information found its way to St. Petersburg.

One of the most active Russian spies was Colonel Miassoyedoff, the commander of the *gendarmierie* at the frontier town of Wirballen, whose work was facilitated by the fact that he was a personal friend

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of the German Emperor and a yearly guest at the Imperial hunting-lodge at Rominten. This Miassoyedoff was subsequently executed for treachery during the war, and at his trial it was proved that he had been in secret collusion with the Germans, to whom he supplied information contributing materially to the victory of Tannenberg. The story goes that he had long been suspected of playing a double game, but that it was found impossible to bring his guilt home to him until he was denounced by a Russian officer who was taken prisoner by the Germans and obtained his release by professing revolutionary sentiments and offering to spy for his captors. On his return he furnished evidence of Miassoyedoff's complicity in a plot to assassinate the Grand Duke Nicholas.

Colonel Nicolai asserts that the evidence against Miassoyedoff was false and believes that he was the victim of a plot to get him out of the way because he was the rival of a very high personage for a certain lady's charms. This may well be the case, and Nicolai declares positively that Miassoyedoff served his own country faithfully and never assisted Germany in any way. The whole affair seems to be wrapped in mystery, and may be classed as one of the episodes of the war that will never be explained.

Colonel Nicolai had good hopes of building up a reliable espionage system in Russia. The supervision exercised by the Okhrana (Russian Political Police) over the lives of all Russian subjects had created a host of informers, so that the average subject of the Tsar had come to regard espionage as a profitable source of income and did not care for what master he worked, provided that he was well paid. Moreover, there was a large number of Jewish pedlars whose trade took them continually across the frontier; these could be employed as letter-boxes.

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The harsh antisemitic policy practised by the Tsarist Government made most Jews pronouncedly anti-Russian in sentiment, and, as moneylenders, they had in their debt numerous Russian officials from whom secret information was obtainable. Colonel Nicolai therefore experimented with an Intelligence staff of Jews, but soon found that the information reaching him was worthless, because, as the Russian Jews were exempt from conscription, they had no military training, and were consequently unable to estimate the true value of the information they procured. Moreover the officials whom they approached often threatened them with denunciation to the police and in some cases even blackmailed their creditors into cancelling their debts as the price of silence.

The Russian Intelligence Service, Nicolai discovered, dealt rigorously with their own agents in East Prussia. At the first sign of slackness the German who worked for Russia was threatened with denunciation to his own police, and the admonition generally had a salutary effect. Practically all the German traitors who received their due punishment were trapped by means of anonymous letters written by their Russian paymasters.

Colonel Nicolai was still grappling with the problems of the Russian frontier when he was nominated Director of Military Intelligence for the German War Office in 1913. Knowing that he would now have to devote much attention to Germany's western neighbour, he paid a visit to France, where he found his movements as closely watched as in Russia, though more discreetly. On his return he spent some time in Alsace-Lorraine, where he soon found the local police incapable of coping with the numerous French spies who could always count on assistance from the Alsatians.

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Many of the latter were in the habit of crossing the frontier to avoid German military service ; they usually enlisted in the French army, where their knowledge of the German language and customs made them excellent material for spies. Colonel Nicolai pays a high tribute to the French Intelligence Service, which, in contrast to the Russian, was efficiently directed and used every chance that came its way.

From Switzerland and Alsace the French Intelligence service pushed tentacles into the very heart of Germany. One of the best French spies was a certain Tomps, who was born in Munich, where his father had established himself as a wine-merchant. He passed his early life in Germany, but at the age of twenty returned to France to perform his military service. Instead of going through the usual routine of barrack-room life young Tomps was drafted into the French Intelligence Service after a few months and received a special training for the duties he was expected to perform. Then he returned to Munich.

His profession was an ideal camouflage for a spy. In search of customers for his firm he travelled all Germany, and business transactions often took him to Bordeaux and Burgundy, where he bought large stocks of wine. Later, through the influence of the French War Office, he was nominated an inspector of the International Sleeping-Car Company, whose coaches traversed the whole network of Continental railways, so that he was continually on the move.

Tomps was a handsome man with an attractive personality, and in Munich he had a select circle of lady acquaintances, most of whom were chorus singers or ballet dancers. As in the course of his travels he continually met people in the theatrical world, he was able to procure engagements for his protégées in various German theatres.

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But although charming, the ladies in whom he was interested were generally devoid of talent, so that they could not command salaries large enough to indulge their expensive tastes. Tomps therefore paid them monthly subsidies on the condition that they laid themselves out to attract the attentions of young officers, whom they were to encourage to spend money freely. The officers in artillery and engineer regiments were the especially favoured ones.

The rest can be easily imagined. A junior lieutenant is seldom blessed with more than enough cash to pay his way, so that unless he possesses a private income or receives an allowance from a rich father, life's lighter pleasures are not for him. If he succumbs to the temptations of the world, he soon runs into debt; his creditors apply to his colonel, with the inevitable result that the impecunious young man is compelled to send in his papers. His military career is at an end, and he is ill equipped to find civilian employment.

When, therefore, the reckless officer was at his wits' end for ready cash to stave off his creditors and postpone the stormy interview with his colonel, he was visited by a mysterious individual who offered him a large sum of money if he could manage to lay hands on certain documents of military importance. By this procedure Tomps secured the plans of several fortresses and photographs of the latest pattern of guns used by the German artillery.

At last one of his victims was caught in the act and confessed. Tomps disappeared to serve a long term of imprisonment, being less fortunate in this respect than the French Captain Lux, who was unmasked when working as a mechanic in the Zeppelin sheds at Friedrichshafen. Lux was sentenced to imprisonment in the fortress of Glatz, but contrived to escape

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with the outside assistance of another French Intelligence agent.

Despite Nicolai's efforts the Russian Intelligence Service continued to score successes. In 1912 Colonel Batjuschin of the Russian General Staff persuaded a German government clerk to photograph for him the plans of the fortress of Thorn on Germany's eastern frontier, and later bribed a military draughtsman in Breslau to furnish him with the plans of that fortress. The Russians were equally active on their Austrian frontier, where they succeeded in suborning Colonel Redl of the Austrian Intelligence Service. Redl held a high post, but spent more money than his salary warranted ; he was at length discovered by the acumen of a policeman and given the option of suicide or exposure. He shot himself in a Vienna hotel, while outside his door four Austrian officers waited to make sure that he made proper use of the revolver they had brought him.

Early in 1914 the German General Staff received a letter from an individual who had obviously signed a false name. In it were enclosed several excerpts from documents containing highly confidential matters relating to German fortifications on the eastern frontier, which had been sold to some foreign power ; an address in Geneva was given, but the writer declined to come to Germany to give further information.

The German Intelligence Service investigated the matter ; after they had sifted the records of a number of persons upon whom suspicion fell, they came to the conclusion that the traitors must have been an army officer, formerly in a high post in the Königsberg garrison, and his clerk. An agent was sent to Geneva to interview the writer of the letter, who was found to be a certain Von Eck, the former secretary to the

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Russian Consulate at Königsberg, whence he had been transferred to Geneva. As his salary was not large enough for his needs, he hoped to add to it by selling the names of the traitors to their authorities.

The two culprits received fifteen years penal servitude, while later Von Eck's duplicity was punished, as shortly after the outbreak of war he ventured over the German frontier in disguise, but was detected and arrested.

In April of the same year German agents in St. Petersburg reported the plans of certain other frontier fortifications to be in Russian hands. From information received they judged that the sale of the documents must have been effected in Berlin. Once more a clerk in government service was found to be the culprit, and his confession implicated Colonel Bassaroff, the Russian military attaché at Berlin.

Bassaroff flatly denied the allegation, and the German Foreign Office hesitated to demand his expulsion until informed by the Intelligence Service that the attaché's courier, who had taken the papers to Russia, was on his way back to Germany and the captain of the ship that carried him had been informed of his identity. If Colonel Bassaroff would care to wait and hear what this man had to say when he was arrested, well and good, otherwise . . .

Colonel Bassaroff took the next train to the frontier, and his accomplice received the maximum term of imprisonment. Colonel Nicolai has every reason to be proud of this incident, because his staff laid their hands on the offender within twenty-four hours of the report from his agent in the Russian capital. He could now boast that he had a number of trustworthy observers in Russia, on whom he could depend for reliable information. It had cost him much time and

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trouble to establish his espionage system there. Having little success with his Jewish agents, he tried to establish a series of information bureaus in German business houses in Russia, but the funds at his disposal were too scanty for him to pay subsidies on a large enough scale to yield good results, for it was only natural for Germans in business abroad to decline the risk of complications with the police and subsequent ruin unless adequate compensation was forthcoming. Nicolai therefore fell back upon the policy of employing a few highly-salaried agents who knew the language and customs well enough to pass for natives, and he was thus able to furnish them with sufficient funds to pay the large bribes that Russian officials demanded for the information they supplied.

In France Nicolai's task proved easier, because the amenities of the land attracted many visitors, and his agents, therefore, travelled about without attracting notice, a thing impossible in Russia where the absence of tourists made every foreigner a marked man. France also possessed the advantage of a good railway system which took his agents to their destinations quickly, while in Russia they consumed much time in covering their fields of action owing to the inadequacy of transport facilities. He also noted that the rising cost of living made many French minor officials anxious to supplement their salaries by any possible means, so that they easily fell victims to the financial bait held out by his agents. Moreover, many army officers cherishing Royalist sentiments did not regard treachery to the Republic with the same aversion as the betrayal of a monarchy.

It did not escape him that feminine influence played a large part in French affairs, and he made use of female agents with good results. He was, in fact, a keen psychologist who studied the weaknesses

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of the two countries in which his spies worked and utilised them to the utmost.

Colonel Nicolai states that it was his intention to develop his Intelligence Service in England in 1915, by which time he hoped that French and Russian affairs would need less attention. But the war came before he could realise his plans, and on August 5th, 1912, the day after Germany violated Belgian neutrality, twenty-one out of his twenty-two agents in England were arrested. Over the subsequent events in Great Britain a veil of darkness descended.

CHAPTER IV

THE PROBLEMS OF THE FRONTIERS

“Whereas a state of war now exists between Ourselves and the Emperor of Germany. . . .”

This, if my memory serves me rightly, was the preamble of the proclamation posted up in every town and village of England in the early days of August, 1914, and with it the problems confronting the spy assumed a new aspect.

The younger generation that has grown up since the war has no idea of the freedom of foreign travel prevailing before those fateful days. When they now journey to the Continent they take it as a matter of course that every time they cross a frontier by land or sea they must show their passports for the inspection of officials appointed by the state they propose to enter. Many countries require them to obtain visas for those same passports before they allow them entrance.

But in the old days a traveller went to every European country—Russia and Turkey alone excepted—without producing any document to prove him a desirable visitor. He went and came as he pleased, and there was no one to say him nay.

This state of affairs naturally facilitated the spy's work. Provided that he did nothing to arouse suspicion before he set out on his mission, he entered the land of his enterprise unquestioned. His baggage, like that of the traveller on business or pleasure,

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was liable to examination by customs officials, but he took care that it contained nothing of an unusual nature. If he accomplished his task successfully, he departed as unobtrusively as he came.

At a blow everything was changed, and the traveller's way was made hard for him. To leave a country he required the permission of its authorities; to enter another country he had to obtain similar permission in the form of a visa on his passport, which was only granted after he had fulfilled endless formalities and shown credentials to prove good reasons for his journey.

The spy was provided with forged papers by his employers, but they did not ensure him a quick journey to the land of his mission. Even when every document he carried was in perfect order he was liable to be held up at frontiers, sometimes for days, and such delay might prove fatal to the accomplishment of his task. For instance, all travellers from Austria to Switzerland were detained at the frontier station of Feldkirch, where they had to seek accomodation in the little town's one hotel until permission was sent from Vienna to allow them to proceed. Every day the frontier guards came to the hotel with a list of persons authorised to resume their journey, many of whom had waited a week or more although nothing was alleged against them.

All these people had previously received visas to leave the country, and most were innocent travellers, Austrians visiting Switzerland for business purposes, Swiss returning to their own land or other neutrals going about their own affairs. But if among them there was an Entente spy, undetected by the Austrian counter-espionage agents, the odds were that the news he bore would prove worthless when he delivered it at his headquarters, for in war events sometimes

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move so rapidly that information procured by spies is soon out of date. If an agent obtains knowledge of the movements of enemy troops, his efforts are a waste of trouble and money unless he conveys it to his own military authorities in time to enable them to change their own plans accordingly.

Sweet, therefore, were the uses of red tape. The innocent suffered with the guilty, because from the point of view of any country's counter-espionage staff it was better to submit a hundred *bona fide* travellers to personal inconvenience and financial loss rather than let one spy slip through with information. So far was this principle carried that in the last two years of the war all belligerent countries bordering upon Switzerland (one of the main centres of espionage), took the precaution of closing their frontiers entirely for long, indefinite periods before any important operations of their armies. We know, they reasoned, that in spite of our strict frontier control, some enemy spies will go through undetected. If, therefore, we close the frontier and allow no one to pass in either direction, we can prevent all but the bare minimum of information from reaching the other side for the critical period. If the business affairs of our own citizens or harmless neutrals suffer in consequence, we are sorry, but we cannot help it. *C'est la guerre.*

The drawback to this procedure was that the mere fact of closing the frontier automatically warned the enemy that something was afoot. The remedy was, of course, an occasional 'bluff' closure, a hold-up of all traffic for the sole purpose of deceiving the enemy, which had the extra advantage of forcing him to special efforts to get his messengers in and out of the forbidden land by hook or crook. Some of them would be certain to blunder and fall into the hands of the counter-espionage forces lying in wait for them.

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At the frontier the traveller whose face or papers did not please the passport officer underwent a personal search. Stripped naked, he was compelled to watch the frontier police going through every scrap of his clothing. They ripped away the lining of his coat and forced apart the soles of his boots to pry for hidden messages, all the while scrutinising his face for any signs of tell-tale anxiety. Several spies are known to have broken down under this ordeal, while one unfortunate British agent is said to have been detected because his underclothing bore the name of a London hosier.

A record of the devices employed by spies of both sides to baffle their searchers would fill a whole book unaided, for man's (and woman's) ingenuity seems to have no limit. One German agent was in the habit of carrying his messages on his spectacles. He wrote them in invisible ink on a slip of mica, which he affixed to the glasses of the spectacles, and time after time, he carried reports from France to the German Intelligence Bureau at Bern in the disguise of a commercial traveller. The French frontier officials suspected him for a long while, and he underwent many searches before they eventually discovered the trick.

Another German, who posed as a dandy, carried his information on his thumbnails. Photographs of important documents were reduced to a microscopic size and photographed on his nails, which were then coated over with a pink varnish of the sort affected by manicurists. This ruse was also discovered eventually but it had found favour with other spies, for all the French frontier stations were ordered to pay particular attention to the thumbnails of suspected persons, with the gratifying result that several other German agents were caught.

A timely bluff sometimes succeeded in unmasking

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spies when all other methods failed. A Swiss chemist was in the habit of making journeys to Paris that seemed too frequent for his legitimate business purposes, but although he was searched several times, nothing could be proved against him. He was closely watched in Switzerland, but his behaviour was above suspicion, and at last a noted female agent volunteered to wrest his secret from him. Adopting the usual procedure, she became his mistress, but although far from insensible to her charms, he steadfastly refused to initiate her into his confidences. She was almost on the point of admitting defeat, when a brilliant idea occurred to her.

"Dearest one, won't you take me with you to Paris next time?" she entreated. "It's so long since I've been there, and I want a holiday."

But the chemist looked dubious. He urged passport and visa difficulties; war-time travelling, he repeated, was uncomfortable for a lady. But when she came to him with due permission from the French Consulate, he consented.

"Arrest us both as spies at Bellegarde," was the message she sent to the French police, and accordingly the chemist and his mistress were separated from the other passengers as soon as they set foot on French soil and conducted to a room specially reserved for the examination of suspects.

"You are both spies," said the police officer, "and it's no use to waste my time by denying it because I have the proofs. You will be court-martialled and shot unless you take the one chance I offer you to save your miserable lives. Tell me where you conceal the despatches you carry to your accomplices in Paris."

The chemist protested vigorously, but the lady burst into a fit of hysterical sobs.

"Tell him" she implored her cavalier between her

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tears, "tell him everything and save us both." But as the chemist still remained obstinate, the official had recourse to further threats, which he emphasised with picturesque details of their last moments when facing the firing-party.

"Tell him everything," entreated the lady again, "it's our only chance."

"She is right" said the representative of the police, "it is your only chance. Hand over the papers you've got, and I'll guarantee your lives."

"But I haven't any papers," replied the chemist. "I give my messages verbally." The next moment he realised that he had fallen into a trap, and, seeing that the game was up, he confessed everything when the promise of safety was repeated.

Possessed of a good memory, he used to take verbal instructions to several German agents in Paris. In return he received their reports, some of which he learnt by heart while others he transcribed into a cypher, the key of which was constantly changed, and gave them to another *letter-box* in Paris to smuggle out of France.

The upshot of the affair was that he resumed his journey to Paris under police supervision. In the bedroom of the hotel where he stayed microphones were installed; in due course the residential agents called for their instructions, while in a neighbouring chamber the police listened in to his conversations with them. Five German spies were arrested, but for a long time the chemist was puzzled as to the way in which his mistress had penetrated his secrets. He came to the conclusion that he must have talked in his sleep.

An island of peace in the midst of four warring nations, Switzerland was the haunt of spies and the natural corridor by which the agents of one party

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made their way into the other's territory. There are some curious anomalies about the Swiss frontier which were generally unknown to both natives and visitors until the exigencies of war forced them into notice.

There were a few square miles of German territory into which any Briton or Frenchman could go without hindrance and boast that he had stood unmolested on German soil during the height of the war. The village of Büsingen, with its surrounding field, is situated in the north-east corner of Switzerland, close to the shores of Lake Constance, but it is a little piece of Germany, an enclave separated from the state of Baden, to which it belongs, by several miles of Swiss land. But no customs-house or frontier post marks the boundaries of Büsingen, and the inhabitants speak the same patois as their Swiss neighbours, whose currency they use for their financial transactions. Nevertheless the young men of Büsingen were summoned to Germany to perform their military service, and when the war came, most of them obeyed their mobilisation orders. As a result of diplomatic conversations between Germany and Switzerland the enclave was put more or less under Swiss sovereignty for the duration of the war for mutual convenience, and out of curiosity many Entente subjects resident in Switzerland visited it to enjoy the experience of a bloodless invasion of German territory. The inhabitants did quite a good trade in consequence.

Not so fortunate was a certain German who once took a trip on the Lake of Geneva. The steamer service is complicated, crossing and recrossing between Swiss and French territory. To reach certain places it was necessary to change steamers, and for purpose of mutual convenience the French Government allowed their landing-stages to be regarded as neutral territory which a German or Austrian might use

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freely while waiting for his boat. But one day a German was seized by irresistible curiosity to see what France looked like in wartime. He contrived to get past the barrier, but was soon detected, and spent the remainder of the war in an internment camp.

At Annemasse, close to Geneva, our late enemies had better luck. It was a nice excursion from Geneva, and many Germans visiting that city used to go to Annemasse to indulge their curiosity of peeping into France. One day a German asked the frontier guards if he might be permitted the liberty of walking a few steps on French soil. The soldiers were complacent ; the Boche not only had his walk on French soil, but actually drank a cup of French coffee at an adjacent café, wrote a postcard to a friend in Zürich and posted it at a French post office, meanwhile closely watched by the French guard, whom he afterwards compensated for their trouble. On his return to Geneva he related his adventure to several friends, and in due course it became quite the fashion for Germans to write a postcard and drink a cup of coffee on French soil. The soldiers on guard reaped a good harvest of tips until the French authorities, scenting possibilities of espionage, put an end to the procedure.

A curious experience awaited travellers who journeyed from Zürich to Schaffhausen by the direct line, for just before reaching its destination the train passed through some ten miles of German territory. Before the war few travellers were aware of this fact, and at least one British subject received a painful shock when his train halted at the station of Lostetten and he saw two field-grey warriors with fixed bayonets on the platform. However, a fellow-traveller assured him that he need not worry, because the Germans had agreed to regard this strip of railway line as

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'relatively neutral.' As long as he remained in his compartment he was perfectly safe, though liable to arrest if he stepped on the platform. Germany nevertheless retained the right to search the train under certain conditions, and several German deserters who reached Schaffhausen were arrested on their way to Zürich, because they had foolishly boasted of their exploits to one of the German spies in the former city. Entente agents took care not to use this line, as they would certainly have been arrested if 'spotted,' but there is no case known of any ordinary traveller being molested.

The peculiar disposition of Swiss territory often made it possible for spies to see what they wanted without venturing over the frontier. One day in the early winter of 1914 a party of sturdy young Englishmen was said to have reached Basel, where their presence was remarked, for few British visitors had been seen there since the war began. Some Swiss wondered why such eligible young men were not fighting for their country, but it was none of their business to make further enquiries. An older man accompanied the party.

Colonel Nicolai assures us that in the first few months of the war practically the full strength of the German Intelligence Service was concentrated in France and Russia. Later he had plenty of spies in Switzerland, but in this case later was too late; if he had enjoyed the assistance of a smart agent in Basel, the latter would have been very much interested in the peregrinations of those young men. He would have guessed their intent and given timely warning.

From Basel to Schaffhausen the Rhine forms the boundary between Germany and Switzerland. The young men and their companion packed themselves into a couple of cars, just as if they were going on a

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holiday trip through Switzerland, but instead of driving southwards to Lucerne and the beauty spots, they steered an eastward course.

On either side of the Rhine is a narrow strip of flat land (sometimes only wide enough for a road and a railway), sloping gently upward towards a range of low hills. Along the road on the Swiss side of the Rhine went the cars, and their passengers noted the topographical features of the country they traversed. They also discussed the relative speeds of motor-cars and aeroplanes. They passed through Schaffhausen, after which another odd thirty miles of road brought them to Lake Constance, the northern shores of which belong to Germany, while the southern edge is Swiss territory. Two thirds of the road that ran along the Swiss shores they traversed, and then they halted at the little lakeside town of Romanshorn.

Had there been a German counterspy there, he would surely have guessed their intent when he saw them gazing across the lake at German Friedrichshafen on the opposite side. With the aid of their field-glasses they had quite a good view of the Zeppelin sheds where Germany's aerial monsters were housed. Perhaps they even hired a motor-boat and steamed out into the middle of the lake where they would have seen the great hangars still more clearly. Be that as it may, before they left Romanshorn, they had gained an excellent notion of the aspects of Zeppelin sheds by day and night. They only saw them from the ground, of course, but they formed their own conclusions as to how they would look from the air.

Perhaps about a week later the young men once more travelled along the banks of the Rhine, but this time they were on the German side, high aloft in their aeroplanes, though from time to time they glanced across at the Swiss bank, where a motor-car whirled

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through the darkness. Its lights were so arranged as to be visible to an aviator looking down on them, and from Basel to Schaffhausen this car was their guide.

There its work ended. Theirs was about to begin. Reaching Lake Constance, on the German side, they knew the exact position of Friedrichshafen and the hangars containing the airships on which so many German hopes were centred. They knew their mark and knew that they could not miss it.

Forty hours later the British press exulted over the air-raid on Friedrichshafen, when bomb after bomb rained down on the Zeppelin sheds. The German defence was caught badly napping, and the damage done was sufficient to delay the operations of the Zeppelins over England for several months.

It was a lesson to Germany that she could not get on without an effective counter-espionage staff in Switzerland, and also showed the unwisdom of locating an aerial base on a site easily overlooked from neutral territory.

What may be termed the 'petty frontier traffic' was of great assistance to spies and a continual source of worry to the forces engaged in combating them. Many Swiss towns, such as Basel, Schaffhausen and Geneva, are situated so close to their frontiers that before the war continual streams of workmen crossed the frontiers daily in both directions on their way to and from their daily occupations. As it was impossible for these people to secure other employment at short notice, they were provided with special permits allowing them to pass freely. Generally they crossed in large numbers at certain hours of the day, so that it was impossible to subject them to any close scrutiny, with the result that spies often mingled with them. Colonel Nicolai admits the embarrassment this petty

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frontier traffic caused his staff, but the only remedy was the permanent closing of the frontier, a drastic measure which public opinion in Germany prevented him from carrying out.

Some cities, as for instance Geneva, were supplied with perishable foodstuffs from the French side of the frontier, while other places in France had to depend upon Switzerland for these commodities. Here again was another means of conveying messages, for it was obviously impossible to control every consignment of food that crossed the border. Nevertheless the French counter-espionage forces were lively enough to score several successes by their vigilance, as the following episode will show.

One day a French agent in Lausanne reported a serious leakage of information, and due research ascertained the fact that a certain lady residing in France was in the habit of receiving large consignments of eggs from Switzerland. It was true that eggs were scarce in France at that period ; it was also true that she entertained lavishly and generously, for, following the custom of many wealthy women without husbands or dependents, she had adopted as ' godsons ' many young men serving at the front. Every week she sent them parcels, and whenever they returned on leave, she fêted them bounteously.

But the French Intelligence Service knew that the intentions of such fairy godmothers were not always as benevolent as they seemed. Sometimes the ladies had the trick of asking their godsons questions about the locality of their trench sectors, naturally so that they could direct their thoughts the more easily to them when they returned to the firing-line. In the course of such conversations other titbits of military information were let fall and eventually found their way via a neutral country to the headquarters of the

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German General Staff. The counter-spies of the French Intelligence Service were therefore ordered to watch this lady. But when they came to survey her movements, they could not find her in association with any suspicious person. Her correspondence was severely censored, but no writing in invisible ink came to light. Her telephone conversations were tapped, but the listeners were none the wiser. In short, appearances made her out to be as benevolent a fairy godmother as any young man at the front could desire.

But as the information still leaked through to the enemy, the counter-spies played their last card and took possession of a consignment of her eggs, which they sent to the chemical laboratory where letters were tested for invisible inks.

Within twenty-four hours the French chemists solved the secret of the eggs, for when they were dipped in a certain solution of gallnut, the writing on their shells was revealed. The ink was a preparation of tithymal.

On an egg-shell was written a request for certain information concerning an aerodrome at Bue and the movements of troops in the neighbourhood of Châlons. The proofs of the lady's guilt were now complete, but instead of arresting her the counterspies ordered her eggs to be returned to her with all celerity, for their work was only half accomplished unless they could ascertain how she gave her answers to the questions she received. While, therefore, she remained at liberty, her movements were watched with redoubled vigilance.

"Awake or asleep, not one second of the day's twenty-four hours was she out of their sight," was the proud boast of the French counterspies, and one day their efforts were rewarded. Their invisible

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eyes watched her having her locks waved and curled by a hairdresser from a neighbouring town and observed with some astonishment how she wrote her replies on a pair of curling-tongs brought by the *coiffeur*. She traced the message with a long pin; the surface of the tongs was then coated over with a layer of soot and grease so that her confederate could leave it about in his shop for days without arousing suspicion.

Whenever a spy has been 'spotted,' it generally pays to leave him at liberty for a few days until he has betrayed his associates to his shadowers. In this case the delay was amply justified, as it enabled the police to arrest the hairdresser, a particularly effective letter-box whom it had never occurred to them to suspect.

The censorship instituted in all belligerent countries was an efficacious means of detecting many communications sent by residential spies across the frontiers. Some of the simpler codes in use at the beginning of the war were easily read, while even the more complicated ones yielded their secrets to the expert solvers who formed an indispensable addition to any censorship bureau. Some codes were, of course, never detected, and there is no doubt that much information leaked out of every country in unsolved codes, but even against these the censorship had its defence, for letters under suspicion of concealing coded messages could be detained in the censor's office for several weeks before being forwarded, in which case the information they contained was generally out of date by the time it reached its destination. In times of crisis all mailbags to neutral countries were sometimes held up for weeks on the chance that one of them might contain news which must be prevented at all costs from reaching the enemy.

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The chemical laboratory was another indispensable department of every censorship bureau. Its principle task was to examine suspected letters for invisible inks ; of these the commoner types in use at the beginning of the war were formed of saliva or lemon-juice. They were easily detected by an application of iodine, but as the war progressed, the chemical laboratories invented new compounds which defied such simple treatment.

Yet in the end these were forced to surrender their secrets to the chemists in the employment of the counter-espionage forces, and at various periods the British, French, German and Austrian laboratories boasted the invention of universal 'revealers' that would bring to light the messages of the most complicated invisible ink in existence. Whereupon some 'super-ink' would be promptly put into use, only to be beaten in turn by the latest 'super-revealer.'

In all probability no invisible ink defied detections for the duration of the war*, though some of them had long runs. A German in Frankfurt a/M employed by the French Intelligence Service sent no fewer than 78 reports to Switzerland before the German postal censorship got on his tracks, as was proved by the fact that the first detected communication bore the reference number 79. A leakage of information had been traced by German counterspies from Frankfurt a/M to Geneva some considerable time before the agent was unmasked. Perhaps his high position in local society was largely responsible for his prolonged immunity, for this Dr. Ross was a retired magistrate who had sat on the Frankfurt bench.

* Dr. Edmund Locard, the chief of the Lyons police laboratories, who was lent to the French Intelligence Service for the duration of the war, has made the claim that his Iglycal preparation will reveal any invisible ink known to science.

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He employed the device of sending local newspapers to a friend in Geneva, writing his reports on them in a chemical ink of his own preparation. His arrest involved two accomplices in Germany, one of whom was a postal official at Mainz and the other an officer serving on the Western Front. All three were shot, while their correspondent at Geneva received a long sentence of imprisonment from a Swiss court.

The staffs of the various censorships used to black out from the letters of all correspondents to neutral countries any passages that they considered likely to convey undesirable news to the enemy, who in his turn was naturally curious to ascertain the nature of the hidden information. Again the Intelligences invoked the assistance of their countries' chemists, who experimented with several processes to remove the covering. This was not too difficult, but often the writing underneath was found to be also destroyed by the 'revealer,' and it was some time before their researches discovered a preparation that would remove the blackening matter without injuring the ink below it. Then the chemists working for the censors invented new blackening processes which defied the 'revealers,' and so the battle went on, with victory inclining alternately to either side, though in the end it may said to have rested with the Intelligences as against the Counter-Intelligences.

The vigilance of the censors on both sides brought to light so many secret communications and neutralised the value of so many others by the delays it imposed that all belligerents came to the conclusion that the only sure way of procuring information was to have it personally conveyed across the frontiers by their agents. Of these the individuals that ran the least risks of detection were the ones with reliable enough memories to learn by heart all the details of

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their messages so that they need carry no incriminating documents on their persons. However ingeniously a written message might be concealed, sooner or later the trick would be discovered, and the inevitable result was the firing-squad. But before the conveyer of either verbal or written reports could cross a frontier, he had to have a passport.

Some neutrals working for the various belligerents could use their own passports, but most agents required to be equipped with false papers, the fabrication of which was the cause of another long battle between Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence. Here again Intelligence may be said to have won, for at the end of the war all Intelligence Services were able to provide their agents with passports of any nationality that would pass as genuine at all frontier or police stations. In texture of paper, form of printed matter, stamps and signatures they were indistinguishable from the genuine articles.

But at the beginning of the war some Intelligences were woefully ignorant of the gentle art of forgery. When the German headquarters decided to send the ill-fated Lody to England disguised as an American, they could only furnish him with a correct passport by purloining that of a citizen of the U.S.A. sojourning in Berlin. This gentleman, whose name was Charles Inglis, wished to leave Germany, but when he applied for permission to depart he was asked to leave his passport for three days pending the necessary formalities. At the end of this period he called for it, but was told, with many apologies, that it had been unaccountably mislaid.

In due course he obtained another passport from his Embassy and departed for his native land, but meanwhile the German Intelligence Service removed his photograph from the passport, substituting for

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it one of Lody, who entered England under the name of Inglis. Lody spoke English with an American accent, as he had resided in the United States for some considerable period, but his inexperience soon betrayed him, and in due course he met his doom in the Tower.

German, French and Swiss passports were not too difficult to manufacture, because they were made up in the form of booklets. The leaves were of cheap, inferior paper, which was easy to match, but the British wartime passport, with its long, folding sheet of best quality paper inside a stiff dark-blue cover, was a document that defied the enemy Intelligences for a long time.

It was comparatively easy for the Intelligences of various belligerents to purloin genuine passports from enemies residing in neutral countries. In such cases it was more or less child's play to remove the original photograph and substitute that of the agent for whom the document was required. The official rubber stamp on the photo was also easy to imitate, especially on German passports, as for some considerable period the German authorities used cheap rubber stamps that soon wore out and gave blurred impressions.

Later, however, the German chemists invented a paste to hold the photograph so firmly that it defied removal. But even this device did not protect German passports for long, for the chemists in Entente service invented a process that wiped out the photograph from the printing paper, which then underwent treatment preparing it to receive the likeness of the passport's new owner. By these means an entirely different face appeared on the print, which never left the passport to which it was originally affixed.

This ruse the Germans defeated by evolving a new sort of printing paper that retained tell-tale marks

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and smears when the first photograph was removed, and so the battle went on. It was amazing to observe the imitations of signatures on passports, for forgery, which was formerly a crime, now became an honourable occupation for the experts employed by the Intelligences to supply false papers. It is indeed whispered diversely that certain skilled imitators of handwriting, who had been closely confined behind iron bars for their country's good, were released from durance vile and invited to exercise their talents—for their country's good.

As the methods employed to protect passports from imitation grew more formidable and frontier police became skilled at detecting the minutest flaw, the Intelligences tried to smuggle their agents into enemy countries by secret routes. Germany's watch on the Rhine is admitted by her own authorities to have fallen very short of perfection, especially on her northern frontier where the stream flows into Dutch territory. By virtue of existing conventions the navigation of the Rhine remained free to neutral shipping in wartime, and many Dutch barges went about their usual business on the German reaches of the stream. Germany demanded a restriction of this traffic, but the neutral Dutch clung tenaciously to their privileges, and as the German river-police could not exercise any stricter supervision than that warranted by their regulations, German Counter-espionage was forced to maintain a large fleet of motor-boats to shadow the movements of barges arousing suspicion. As the Rhine flows past the important fortified towns of Mainz, Coblenz and Cologne, as well as through the great industrial districts (Dusseldorf am Rhein is only a few miles from the Krupp works of Essen), the necessity for such precautions can well be imagined, but in spite of them a fairish number of

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Entente spies succeeded in penetrating Germany disguised as Dutch bargemen and returned to bring information concerning the latest developments at Krupp's. Throughout the war Essen's secrets were under the constant supervision of Entente eyes.

Lake Constance was another vexatious problem to the German Counter-espionage Department, especially after the air raid on the Zeppelin works at Friedrichshafen recounted in the earlier portion of this chapter. The frontier between Germany and Switzerland lies in the middle of the lake, which on dark nights was lit by the search-lights of many armoured motor-boats darting hither and thither in quest of the craft with muffled oars manned by Entente agents who strove to win the German shores. And occasionally the dwellers on the Swiss side heard the rattle of machine-guns, followed by grim silence. If the depths of Lake Constance could be dredged, the fate of more than one spy might be revealed, whom the clerks of his Intelligence Service wrote off in their books as : "Missing : further details unknown."

The French were lucky in that their shores of Lake Geneva contained no works of such national importance as the Zeppelin sheds on Lake Constance. Nevertheless they patrolled their waters vigilantly, for there were many lonely spots that seemed specially created to afford German agents a sheltered landing. At several places the Savoyan Alps rise almost sheer from the lake, so that a skilled mountaineer who knew his ground might worm his way up a herdsman's path and so gain safety.

But not only from her Swiss frontier did danger threaten France, for the German Intelligence Service contrived to establish a base of operations in Spain where enemy agents penetrated from the south. Some of these were expert climbers who crossed the

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frontier by the more difficult Pyrenean passes along break-neck paths used for centuries by the smugglers. In the closing stages of the war, when Bordeaux became one of the bases used by American troops, the German spies operating from Spain grew in number and importance. Their reports usually reached headquarters in roundabout fashion via Sweden, but often despatches were entrusted to the submarine commanders, who had found on the Spanish coast many quiet covers where they could land unseen.

The German Intelligence Service had a bureau at San Sebastian, the last town on Spain's Atlantic seaboard and only a few miles from the French frontier. From there they put out tentacles to Biarritz, where in 1916 a group of spies was captured by the combined efforts of British and French counter-espionage forces.

The leaders, however, contrived to escape into Spain, and later in the same year British agents in Switzerland gained possession of important papers by the clever robbery of a German courier's despatch case at Bern, with the result that much interesting light was thrown on the activities of German spies on the Spanish frontier.

It was learnt that all reports from the interior of France were sent to one of the little spas nestling on the French slopes of the Pyrenees. Sometimes Cauterets was the chosen *dépôt*, while on other occasions Gavarnie or Luchon was favoured. In any case the *letterbox* took them over one of the lesser-known mountain passes, and from the first Spanish town on the other side they were forwarded to a German Intelligence agent at Barcelona.

One of the most interesting documents in the captured despatch-box was a report by a certain Maria José dei Pasi at Marseilles, who had contrived to glean much news concerning the movements of

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warships using the naval base of Toulon, information which would have been of inestimable value to the German submarine commanders. Dei Pasi, a native of Buenos Ayres, but a naturalised Frenchman, was promptly arrested and met his end with courage when facing the firing-squad at Vincennes, the scene of so many executions, while the French Intelligence Service, again in co-operation with the British, set themselves to follow up the clues he had left them.

Their chief difficulty was to ascertain whether the next collection would take place at Luchon, Cauterets or Gavarnie, as they had no means of ascertaining whether these depots were used in systematic order or whether chance and circumstances dictated the choice. They decided to watch all three, but for a long time failed to observe suspicious movements anywhere. Some vague clues from the revenue men patrolling the Spanish frontier sent them up into the mountains, where they laid hands on several individuals endeavouring to cross into Spain, but their prisoners proved to be smugglers or deserters from the French army who had no connections with any German agent. They were on the point of abandoning their mission when a message from the Prefect of the Department of the Haute-Pyrénées gave them fresh hope.

At Tarbes, he reported, certain suspicious individuals had been observed talking to soldiers in a café, and as the deserters recently captured had been members of the garrison in the capital of his department, he wondered whether they had been seduced by enemy agents who promised to escort them over the mountain paths into Spain where peace reigned and well-paid posts were found for men supplying useful information. The French agents therefore went to Tarbes, where they succeeded in worming themselves into the confidence of a soldier named Courrèjes, who actually

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boasted that he had been promised employment by the German Intelligence Service as soon as he was over the frontier. He also committed the fatal blunder of telling them the name of the pass by which he and his friends proposed to cross at a not far distant date.

At the appointed time a band of picked men lay in ambush high up in the mountains and close to the slope along which the mule-track wound its way to the *col* between two peaks. But the sky was black with heavy clouds that gave warning of a storm to come, and unfortunately the full fury of wind and rain burst upon them just as the deserters and their guide approached. The watchers made a dash for their prey, but in the confusion the fugitives dashed past them and gained the height of the pass. The Frenchmen pursued, firing as they went.

They made out the forms of three men, two of whom soon disappeared into the darkness. But the third, who happened to be Courrèjes, was slightly wounded, and they overtook him as he stumbled down the path at the other side. He was found to be carrying a bag, which contained, among other documents, the plans of the latest type of machine-gun in use in the French army. Courrèjes was brought back to be duly tried and executed. He had reason to complain of Fate's ill-usage, for he was actually descending the path on the Spanish side of the frontier when caught. Had his pursuers encountered a Spanish gendarme, they would have been prisoners in his stead.

His capture was, therefore, a flagrant breach of neutrality, but the secret did not leak out till long after the conclusion of the war, and on the whole he may have been said to deserve his doom on account of his folly in chattering at a moment when silence was golden.

CHAPTER V

THE PROBLEMS OF THE SHORES

With the arrest of Ernst and his twenty-one confederates, Britain's counter-espionage problems were simplified, for it was certain that no German agent of any importance was at large in the United Kingdom. As every person landing at a British port was now under proper supervision, the spy's way into the island was as hard as it should be.

Colonel Nicolai, who is in a position to speak with authority, states frankly that the waters of the Channel were Britain's surest defence against German espionage. Meanwhile the Intelligence Service sent its agents to Holland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark to gain all possible information concerning the crews and passengers of ships sailing from their harbours to British ports. Every German residing in neutral countries was the object of attention.

Germany's first opportunity of sending agents to England to replace those arrested along with Ernst, came in September and October, 1914, when a quarter of a million Belgian refugees poured across the Channel. At the conclusion of the German forward movement, culminating in the capture of Antwerp, terrified fugitives packed the decks of every available sea-craft, and some desperate souls even made the passage in rowing boats. Most of these refugees were in a parlous plight; wives wandered about frantically,

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seeking husbands parted from them in the final rush seaward, and parents enquired vainly for the children torn from them in the confusion of headlong flight. Many had no other belongings than the clothes they wore.

Heartrending scenes were enacted, and much effort was needed to provide food and shelter for these strangers in a strange land, whom the events of a few swift weeks had torn from the security of their homes and cast forth to face an uncertain future. It was, therefore, impossible to examine the credentials of all who called themselves Belgians as strictly as Intelligence would have desired; their very numbers alone made any adequate control of their *bona fide* impossible.

Under these conditions a fairish number of German spies found their way into England, but they do not seem to have given satisfaction to their employers. They were untrained and inexperienced; many of them were men who, debarred by physical reasons from serving their country at the front, volunteered for secret missions in a first flush of patriotic enthusiasm. They soon found their abilities inferior to their tasks; some relapsed into inactivity, maintaining their Belgian disguises, while others were happy enough to surrender to the police and settle down to the monotonous but safe routine of an internment camp.

Then came the patriot, Lody, who passed himself off as an American and by virtue of his naval service possessed sufficient technical knowledge to glean information that might have been serviceable to his headquarters, had he been able to transmit it. But his clumsy efforts to communicate with Germany via Sweden and his inability to cover his tracks from the British counterspies soon betrayed him, and he went

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to his death as a gallant adversary who was bound to fail in a forlorn hope.

The German Intelligence Service was now in receipt of unlimited funds, and its spy-schools began to train fresh agents for missions abroad. But as yet it was impossible to find the right type of material, as is shown by the fact that during the fortnight covering the end of May and the beginning of June, 1915, seven German spies were detected and arrested in England. The first batch of pupils that Colonel Nicolai sent over may therefore be said to have failed ignominiously, for none of these unfortunate men contrived to transmit any information of real value prior to his arrest.

It is superfluous to relate their adventures and subsequent fates, which have all been chronicled in other works of a similar nature, but a few points of resemblance may be noted. Kupferle was a German who had lived some time in America, while Buschmann was a Brazilian, Müller a Russian, Jannsen and Roos Dutchmen. There were also several Scandinavians. It would therefore appear that Colonel Nicolai tried the experiment of pressing into German service any neutral or Entente subject who could be persuaded to risk his life for money or adventure.

Most of them were caught in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth or other naval establishments, and several, such as Jannsen and Roos, were seamen who could appreciate the value of any naval information they picked up, for at that time the Germans did not pay much attention to Britain's military preparations, although extremely interested in the movements of her fleet.

The activities of the German spies in England during the first year of warfare may therefore be classified in three groups :

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(1) The twenty-two residential agents who formed the nucleus of the larger staff with which Germany intended to operate on British soil. Their usefulness came to an end within the first twenty-four hours of war, because all save one were arrested on August 5th, 1914. They were probably in receipt of regular salaries.

(2) The spies who entered England with the Belgian refugees. For the greater part untrained enthusiasts, who, to all intents and purposes, faded out of the picture soon after their arrival, though some may have lain low until time and experience taught them their business.

(3) A batch of neutrals or Germans able to pose as neutrals. Sent over after a period of training in a spy school, which could not, however, equip them properly to cope with the trained British counter-spies and their allies of Scotland Yard, because their training was based on peace-time methods rather than actual war experience. They were paid by results and often left short of funds.

After these failures Germany set to work to train a fourth class of spies, which, judging by the accounts on both sides, proved more successful. As several German agents belonging to this fourth class have placed their experiences on record, we have some idea as to how they came into action.

The Germans seem to have operated on a system similar to that of the "Meldewesen" (Notification Procedure), with its police dossiers. Before the war all visitors staying in Germany more than a few weeks were required to fill up forms stating particulars of birth, parentage, residence, occupation, etc., to the local police authorities. Any German changing his residence was obliged to make a similar notification, with the result that every police station possessed

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volumes of information concerning the lives of all natives and foreigners residing within its jurisdiction. Duplicates of these dossiers were forwarded to a central bureau in Berlin, where the official detective force found them of great assistance in tracing the whereabouts and activities of habitual criminals.

All male Germans serving with the colours were obliged to give further details of their occupations and accomplishments, in case the state could make special use of them in time of war. But during the first few months of hostilities there was a disorder in Germany that resulted in a neglect of the special qualifications possessed by many men, so that a number of square pegs were forced into round holes. For example, the German victories on their eastern front brought them in thousands of Russian captives, and, as every military man knows, the information obtainable from questions put to prisoners, often possesses great value. But the warlords of the eastern front soon discovered that they did not possess sufficient officers speaking Russian to interrogate all their captives, and consequently much valuable information of this kind was lost. They applied to Berlin, where War Office clerks went through the dossiers of all active and reserve officers and found that many who were fluent in Russian had been sent to France or Belgium, where their linguistic achievements were of no use to themselves or their country. As it took time to trace these men up and down the long line of trenches that now stretched from the North Sea to the Swiss frontier, some months elapsed before Germany's eastern front was equipped with an adequate staff of interpreters.

After the failure of the third group of spies, the heads of the German Intelligence Service began to look around for better material, and naturally called upon the police dossiers of the Meldewesen for assist-

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ance. From the experiences of a member of this fourth group of spies we have an idea how the system worked.

A certain Otto Jens, a resident of Hamburg, was called to the colours at the beginning of the war and took part in the first drive through Belgium. After a rest, occasioned by an attack of malaria, he found himself entrenched somewhere in the neighbourhood of Arras, with every prospect of remaining there until some bullet or shell removed him to higher spheres.

So thought Corporal Jens, but one day, when he was in a rest billet, a message came, requesting his immediate presence at the Division's headquarters. He was told to leave his helmet, pack and rifle, which made him imagine that all unwittingly he had committed some offence of extraordinary gravity. When informed that he was to keep his revolver, his bewilderment increased, for its retention implied that he was not to be put under arrest. What then was the meaning of this strange summons ?

His sergeant could only tell him that he was to report to the divisional headquarters at once, but on arrival he received no further enlightenment, save that he was to return to his regimental depot in Germany. The red tape that he encountered in the next few weeks will shock readers who have stereotyped opinions on the subject of Teutonic efficiency, for he was eight days on the railroad, and when he reached the depot, no one knew why he had been sent there or what to do with him. He passed a month of idleness, still ignorant of the reasons that had enjoined his withdrawal from the front.

Then, one day, came the order that he was promoted to sergeant and discharged from the army. He went home in an irritable frame of mind, for he had recently been married and knew that without the

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allowance he made his wife from his army pay she would find great difficulty in making both ends meet. He wondered whether he might look out for civilian employment; it was quite on the cards that if he obtained a post, he would be called up again as soon as he was used to his work. This seemed quite likely; the military authorities did not intend to lose sight of him, for he was under orders to report to the district commander within twenty-four hours of his arrival in Hamburg.

When he did so, the mystery deepened; he was informed that although officially discharged, he was still to consider himself under military orders. Moreover he was to report to the War Office in Berlin on the following day.

More red tape! A genial Bavarian major asked him what he had been doing with himself all the previous weeks when his presence was so urgently needed. Meanwhile, would he call again on the morrow, when they could have a nice long talk together.

But his second visit to the War Office gave him no further enlightenment, for he was told to return to Hamburg forthwith and report at a certain address the next day.

There, at last, he was at the end of his pilgrimage, for on arrival he found that he had entered local offices of the German Intelligence Service. An officer informed him that he was considered to possess suitable qualifications for a spy, and he was astounded to find how well the Intelligence officials were acquainted with the details of his past life. They knew, for instance, that his mother was of Danish birth and that he spoke the Danish language without an accent, in addition to being fluent in English, Spanish and French. They knew his school record and the various posts he had held since the commencement of his

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business career ; in short, they had found what they believed to be the right man for their work and they had hooked him out of the firing-line at Arras.

But Jens could not at once make up his mind to accept their offer although informed that he would be sent back to the front if he refused. He was not afraid of the danger, but shared the middle-class prejudices concerning the spy's profession and shrank from the stigma attached to the word. But after several days of indecision he came to the conclusion that however repugnant spying might prove to his nature, it was at least preferable to the Flanders mud.

The German Intelligence Service appears to have found the right way to develop any latent talent they observed in Jens and his fellows. After a fortnight's intensive training in a spy-school, he was sent to work in Copenhagen, where he knew that his life was safe, for in neutral countries the worst that can befall a spy is a long term of imprisonment. He, therefore, gained his practical experience under conditions less nerve-wracking than those that the agent in enemy territory encounters.

His duties were manifold. He reported on the strength and disposition of the Danish army, Germany being anxious to acquire full knowledge of her northern neighbour's military forces in case she should come into the war on the Entente side, and he was ordered to procure all possible information about the Danish fortresses on the Schleswig frontier. By watching the shipping in Danish and Norwegian ports, he gleaned much news concerning British commercial activities and was instructed to keep a look-out for British submarines and torpedo craft, which the German Admiralty suspected of being established in bases in the Norwegian fiords. As a camouflage for his operations he bought fish for importation to Germany

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and was allowed a commission on all transactions, which he found a welcome addition to his salary, as he had to account strictly for all his expenses. Another of his duties was to watch the work of British Consulates, to whom he generally introduced himself as a Schleswiger of Danish sympathies and a deserter from the German army. By volunteering as a spy against Germany, he came in touch with various British Intelligence agents in Scandinavia, whose activities he reported to his own headquarters.

Jens seems to have fulfilled these duties satisfactorily, though after a while he attracted the attention of the Danish authorities. At intervals he returned to Germany, where he was employed on counter-espionage to give him a rest and enable him to be forgotten by the Danish and Norwegian police.

When expert at his job, he undertook his first mission into enemy country. Posing as a Danish commercial traveller, he entered Finland via Sweden, with instructions to report on the state of the country and the number of Russian troops quartered there. He confessed to inward quakings when subjected to a lengthy cross-examination at the frontier, where a Danish interpreter employed by the Russian police tested the purity of his accent. In Helsingfors he was under such close supervision that he was thankful to escape with a whole skin, but afterwards he became quite hardened to these trips.

Jens found weak links in the chain of watchers around our shores, for when masquerading as a Schleswiger with Danish sympathies, he was allowed to work as a stoker on board a Swedish steamer carrying cargo to England. He went ashore at Blyth, where he was questioned by the harbour police, to whom he confessed his German nationality, but pleaded that he had deserted from the army on account of Danish

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sympathies. His tale impressed them so much that he was taken to Newcastle to be questioned by an Intelligence agent, and in such fashion he contrived to gain much information concerning the strength and disposition of the British troops in the north-eastern area. When on board his boat again and bound for Sweden, he saw the British fleet steaming eastwards in battle array.

On arrival at Gothenburg he reported the results of his trip to a German residential agent, but meanwhile the British Intelligence in Sweden had formed such a favourable opinion of him that he was actually invited to proceed to Germany in their employment. So he travelled back to his own country with false papers of British manufacture, and on his way learnt in Copenhagen the result of the Battle of Jutland, which had just been fought.

In Germany he was told that his information had been of the greatest value in the recent sea-fight and that it tallied in every detail with reports received from German residential agents in England. This goes to prove that by the summer of 1916 Germany had succeeded in establishing on our shores a batch of spies who could be relied upon to transmit accurate news.

Many details of the Battle of Jutland are still shrouded in mystery, so that we do not yet know how the German battle-fleet contrived to escape when at one phase of the conflict it was cut off from its base by superior British forces. Mr. Winston Churchill has his own explanation, while other writers proffer theories concerning misunderstandings between Jellicoe and Beatty or misinterpretation of wireless messages from the Admiralty Office at Whitehall. A French writer even goes so far as to declare that a German spy ensconced in the British Admiralty sent a message

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to mislead the British pursuers as to the line of flight taken by their opponents.

His assertion is daring, but lacks confirmation. In any case the German fleet escaped in a fashion that might be deemed miraculous unless some incredible blunder was perpetrated on our side or unless the enemy received reliable warning from agents in England. The latter alternative may well be true, in which case it is a feather in the cap of the German Intelligence Service.

Several German spies were caught at Dieppe by a smart ruse of British counterspies operating in the disguise of French Customs House officials. These agents, who were on their way to Germany via Switzerland, thought that passengers landing from a cross-channel steamer would not be too closely supervised on the shores of Britain's ally and least of all did they expect anything but the usual formalities from the staff of the Customs House. In this way a German travelling with an American passport was completely taken off his guard, while later several of his compatriots fell into the same trap.

The French kept a close watch on their ports, and in the autumn of 1916, their Intelligence Service became aware that a German agent was greatly interested in a harbour in Brittany serving as a base for naval aviation. Although this harbour adjoined a seaside resort, they experienced no great difficulty in obtaining particulars of the foreigners in the locality, with the result that their suspicion fell on a Pole inscribed in the books of his hotel as an artist.

Every day he was out with brushes, canvas and easel, but enquiries made in Paris proved him to be unknown in Montmartre, Montparnasse or any of the haunts affected by the art-students of the capital. No picture-dealer seemed to have heard of him.

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On the other hand nothing could be proved against him. He was not found to consort with any suspicious individual, and as the locality was a well-known beauty spot that always attracted many artists, there was no reason why he should not be a genuine landscape painter. He went out painting every day, and the staff and visitors of the hotel admired his work.

Luckily the French Intelligence Service possessed an agent whose hobby was painting, and to him the case was assigned. He lost no time in taking up his quarters at the same hotel as the suspect, to whom he introduced himself as a brother-artist from Italy. The two soon became good friends, but after a while the counterspy began to wonder whether he was not on a false scent. His subject was undoubtedly an accomplished painter, and as he spoke French without any trace of foreign accent there was no possibility of tracing his origin by some tell-tale mispronunciation that a German might make. When not out with his easel, he played tennis or amused himself with other visitors in perfectly normal fashion.

The counterspy ascertained that the Pole wrote many letters to a certain Frau Müller in Bern, but the explanation of this correspondence was given to him unasked. The lady was a widow carrying on the business of her late husband, which happened to be that of a picture-dealer. For many years Müller had bought the products of the Polish artist's brush, and his relict continued the connection. This postal censorship confirmed this; all the Pole's letters to Frau Müller dealt with the topic of pictures he had sold or hoped to sell, and there was no suspicion of a code.

But one day, when examining a sketch in chalks executed by the Pole, the counterspy noticed several slight faults in perspective that the eye of a layman

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would have passed over. At first he was puzzled, for the errors were of the nature that might have been expected from a beginner, whereas the suspect was undeniably an artist of skill and experience.

Over a sleepless night he pondered, and then, with dawn, came a gleam of enlightenment. After lunch he asked the Pole if he might make a copy of the chalk sketch he had seen the previous day, as he was interested in its *genre* and thought it a masterpiece. For a moment the Pole seemed to hesitate, excusing his reluctance by the pretext that the picture was already expected in Bern and he had intended to pack it off that very day. But the counterspy repeated his request in pleading tones.

The Pole looked at him for an instant, as if loath to come to a decision. "Very well, then," he said at last. "Take it along with you."

The counterspy bore the picture to his room and placed it in a good light. For full five minutes he stared at it, unable to make up his mind. If it was a genuine landscape, he knew that he could never forgive himself for spoiling it, and yet . . .

It was his duty to neglect no possible chance. Out came his knife, and he began to scrape at the surface.

Suddenly he breathed a sigh of relief. Underneath the pastoral landscape the outlines of a second picture began to make their appearance. The vanes of a windmill vanished, revealing a lighthouse; a clump of trees turned into a fort and the straggling rustic paths took on the aspect of metalled roads. A green field disappeared, and in its place was the grey sea. When all superfluous detail had been scraped away, he saw before him a detailed sketch of a French submarine base.

The counterspy hastened downstairs and enquired for his Polish friend. But the hotel's hall-porter

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said that only a few minutes ago Monsieur had gone out in his automobile ; no doubt he would be back at dinner-time.

The Polish artist was never seen again, and a few days later the counterspy pretended to have received a letter from his friend, stating that he had been suddenly called away and asking him to pay his bill and forward his luggage. In order to hush the affair up, the French Government had the doubtful pleasure of paying the spy's expenses, and he had lived well.

But some other sketches found in his room amply compensated them for their outlay.

Like their British colleagues the French counterspies were constantly on the look-out for wandering spies of the Jens type, who visited their ports disguised as neutral seamen and sailed off with much valuable information. The freemasonry among sailors of the same nationality who meet by chance in a foreign port facilitated the spy's task considerably, for after a long spell at sea the mariner is only too happy to gossip with any stranger he meets in a bar in the harbour quarter.

Let us imagine that a Dutchman is the only representative of his nation on board a steamer that has put in at the French port of Nantes at the mouth of the Loire, which was one of the most important shipping centres during the war. When he has a free evening he is anxious to see a bit of shore life, with the consequence that he invariably drifts towards one of the bars or music-halls in the harbour quarter that cater for his kind. By pure chance (at least so it seems to him) he runs up against another Dutchman. The two compatriots chat a while and then decide to make an evening of it together. Money is spent, much alcohol is consumed, and tongues are loosened.

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"When are you sailing?" enquires Dutchman No. 2, when the time comes for them to part.

"To-morrow," replies No. 1 without thinking. "The skipper has got his clearance papers."

"That's a pity," says No. 2. "I shan't see you again. Well, what about another drop?"

They drink, and Dutchman No. 2 speculates on the possibility of meeting his new friend in some other port. "Where are you bound for?" he enquires.

"Cardiff. Convoy assembles at Brest, so our steward heard the old man say. Squadron of British destroyers taking us across."

Now Dutchman No. 1 has been warned not to talk too freely to casual strangers. It has been represented to him that acquaintances picked up by chance in harbour bars are often spies and that even if as a neutral he has no interest in the result of the war, his neutrality will avail him nothing when a torpedo from a German submarine sinks the ship. But the liquor he consumed has disarmed his suspicions of a fellow-countryman, with the result that he gives Dutchman No. 2 sufficient information to make him very interested in the proceedings at Brest. Without much trouble he gets into touch with other seamen whose ships are assembling to form part of the convoy. Moreover in St. Nazaire a Dane has told a Dane that his ship is under orders for Brest to join a convoy proceeding to Cardiff, and in Rochefort a Spaniard has imparted similar news to a Spaniard.

In the end a report goes to the German Admiralty containing a list of all the ships making up the convoy. The escort, it has been ascertained, will consist of six destroyers, two torpedo boats and a light cruiser. Most of the vessels are going with ballast, as they are due to take cargoes of Welsh coal for French ports.

Convoys assemble slowly, and their progress is not

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too speedy. If the German Admiralty receives its agent's report in time, submarines may be detailed to attack the convoy before it reaches Cardiff, though it is more probable that they will wait until the ships leave the Welsh port with their valuable freights.

There are also numerous little bays off the Brittany coast, where at certain hours a German submarine may put in unobserved. A boat with muffled oars creeps landward through the darkness, and a German officer comes ashore to receive the residential spy's report.

In that case the convoy is almost certain to be attacked, and many a sailorman will lose his life. But, by a curious irony of fate, some German spy on his way to England may find a watery grave when the ship on which he is working is holed by a torpedo. In that case perhaps some half a dozen other ships will be preserved from the mysterious doom of the 'pencil-bomb' that constantly threatened them in the last year of the war.

So great was this danger that the harbour-police of ports on our north-eastern coast received special instructions to keep strict watch on all foreign seamen on board the vessels that bore food and raw materials to Britain's shores. A sailor strolling along the side of a quay to which cargo-boats are moored may seem a harmless enough individual in time of peace, but in early 1918 his powers for mischief were great. If, for instance, he could contrive to approach the bunkers of a ship, he might draw from his pocket a stub of pencil some three inches long and toss it unobserved into the coal.

A pencil is such a small object; no one sees its flight through the air, and when it falls among the coals it quickly disappears. The stoker who shovels the fuel into the ship's furnace does not see it; if he

These miniature infernal machines were used on land and sea by both sides. We do not know who was their inventor ; one story attributes them to a German Intelligence agent, another to a Swiss professor, and there may be half a dozen other legends current concerning their origin. But the fact remains that the blockaded Central Powers found them a welcome weapon, and the Entente group of belligerents was not slow to flatter their foes by imitating their latest weapon of destruction.

The intensive submarine campaign of 1917 had failed to realise Germany's hopes of bringing Britain to her knees, though it was within a hair's-breadth of success. But a miss is as good as a mile, and the U-Boats had harmed their own country by bringing the United States into the war on the Entente side. Every day an average of some two thousand ships entered British ports ; every month the statistics of vessels sunk by the U-Boats showed a dwindling percentage. U-Boats, aircraft, hydrophones and depth charges combined to harrass the lives of submarine commanders, until Germany at last realised she could no longer achieve victory by her actions under the waters.

If the U-Boats had failed, other means of destroying Entente shipping and Entente commerce must be found, and the pencil-bomb proved a terribly effective

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substitute in the hands of the German spies who visited our coasts disguised as neutral seamen.

They also used these weapons in neutral countries. The Scandinavian harbours in particular were a fruitful field of operations, because they were the starting points for ships bearing the cargoes of timber felled in the vast forests of Sweden, Norway and Finland. All the pit-props used in British mines are made of such timber, and the Germans reasoned that if the supply failed, the mines would be unable to yield the supply of coal needed for the factories that turned out munitions and war-material. The pit-prop was the prop of the war.

A German spy who has published his experiences, admits to having destroyed or disabled with this terrible weapon ships lying in the ports of Copenhagen, Bergen, Gothenburg, Hartlepool, Hull and Aberdeen. The operation undoubtedly called for pluck, as some spies went as far as to throw their pencils into the bunkers of ships on which they sailed, trusting that the consequent explosion would disable but not sink the vessel. They reckoned that the crew would have time to take to the boats, as it usually did, and be rescued by another ship in the same convoy. But often their calculations must have been upset by unforeseen factors, in which case the spy perished by his own weapon.

Many fires and explosions in munition factories were also due to the operations of spies armed with pencil bombs, although at the time the authorities on both sides did not care to admit it. In view of the effect on the workers, it was considered politic to ascribe them to the carelessness of some workman with a cigarette or the unsuitable storage of explosive materials. But the truth has a habit of leaking out in spite of all efforts to suppress it.

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For a long time the German public was mystified about the explosion that destroyed the big munition works at Quickborn, near Hamburg. Some gentlemen of the press divined the truth, but as all newspapers were under strict censorship, they were unable to publish their surmises.

The passage of time has now worn thin the veil of secrecy that shrouded the Quickborn explosion. We now know that several experts searched the debris of the shattered buildings, while counterspies, disguised as munition workers, mingled with the factory hands to gather all possible clues from gossip.

Investigation showed that the damage was caused by four separate explosions in different sheds, all of which must have taken place within a few minutes of one another. But so shaken were the nerves of the survivors that their evidence was worthless. From the living the counterspies extracted no clues, but when the ghastly task of examining the mutilated bodies of the victims was in progress, the dead told their own tale.

In a pocket on the skirt of a female worker was found a purse containing, among various odds and ends, a London omnibus ticket.

CHAPTER VI

SPIES FROM THE AIR

The two preceding chapters have endeavoured to deal with some of the difficulties besetting spies travelling by land or sea to the scenes of their missions and the devices they employed to bring back the information they acquired. This ceaseless battle between spy and counterspy has pursued the same course ever since the first war waged far back in the dim ages before men wrote history.

By land or by water the spy strove to reach his field of operations ; the counterspy watched the shores and frontiers to obstruct him. So it was yesterday, and so it will be to-morrow.

So and otherwise, for the progress of science has given the spy a third method of approaching his goal. High above the raging din of the battle-front he can be borne through the air and landed in some lonely spot behind the enemy's lines. The dangers attendant on the fulfilment of his mission he must still undergo, but at the appointed time his pilot can pick him up and bear him back to safety. He is thus spared the ordeal of making his way out of the foeman's land—that last stiff obstacle that has been the downfall of many a good man.

It must not be implied that all spies will abandon the old methods and make their future journeys by air. The continuous progress of aviation will undoubtedly lead to a more frequent use of aeroplanes for all purposes, spying included, but for the immediate

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future we may expect the majority of secret agents to reach their destination by rail or steamer, like ordinary mortals. The spy, however, who operates immediately behind the enemy's fighting-line will probably rely largely on the aeroplane as a mode of conveyance in the next war, which we all hope will never take place.

In the latter years of trench warfare on the western front the British and French Intelligences found it convenient to enlist the aid of airmen to convey their spies to chosen spots behind the German lines and return later to pick them up. Shortly after the war a British aviator related his experiences as a carrier of spies. Having accepted the mission, which was only assigned to airmen who volunteered, he was sworn to the utmost secrecy and did not meet his passenger until a few minutes before the flight started. Then he saw a group of men enter the aerodrome, and although he had been told what to expect, he could not refrain from a whistle of surprise on seeing a man in field-grey uniform walk up to him. "He was the most German-looking Englishman I ever saw," the pilot admitted, "for his face, bearing and gestures, were in complete harmony with the uniform he wore."

The two men shook hands ; the passenger took leave of his companions and climbed into his seat.

The pilot had previously reconnoitred his ground and contrived to bring off a perfect descent on to the waste patch some miles behind the German lines that had been chosen for his landing-place. To a solitary tree a lantern was affixed—by whom the pilot was not allowed to know.

The spy clambered out. "The same time next Tuesday," he remarked. "Wait half an hour, then if I don't turn up, hop it. Napoo."

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"Good luck," said the aviator, holding out his hand, and the pseudo-German walked away in the direction of the lantern, which he extinguished. The pilot flew off.

On the appointed day he again found the guiding light, but there was no sign of any German officer. He glanced at his watch from time to time; at last the half hour was up and, obedient to instructions, he was about to depart when he saw the lantern's light go out. A few seconds later he made out a tall form striding towards him.

"Sorry I cut it so fine," said the German officer, and climbed in. The aviator in question made several journeys with the same man, but one day he failed to put in an appearance. After giving him a generous time-allowance, the pilot flew away.

He never learnt the fate of his passenger. Possibly he was detected, court-martialled and shot, but on the other hand he might have found it impossible to keep his appointment that night, in which case he would take shelter in the house of some French peasant and borrow a suit of civilian clothing. Then he would try to make his way into Belgium and cross the Dutch frontier.

Other variations of this procedure were tried. Sometimes the spy took a cage of carrier pigeons so that he could inform headquarters of his progress and send word when he required to be picked up. Often he travelled to his landing-place in his own uniform, changing into enemy or civilian garb when he landed. This precaution saved his life if the enemy had got wind of his exploits and were waiting to capture him when he landed, for as long as he was taken in his country's uniform he was entitled by the laws of war to be treated as an ordinary prisoner.

Occasionally the return journey proved an exciting

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affair. Lieutenant Bert Hall, the American soldier of fortune, who was one of the founders of the famous Lafayette Squadron of American aviators attached to the French army before the United States entered the war, has put his experiences on paper, and they contain a vivid description of a 'pick-up,' which ended in the spy gaining the improvised aerodrome after outdistancing his pursuers.

"Three days later a message came from the Intelligence Headquarters that my spy was ready to return and I was given orders to pick him up. This time the trip was made late in the evening. When I arrived at the Rocroi field, I spiraled down from a very high altitude and cut my motor so as not to make any unnecessary noise. Just before I touched the ground, I cut my motor on again and at first the damned thing didn't take. It was a trying moment, but after a turn or two it fired and I knew I was safe on that score. I landed as I had been instructed, but there was no spy to be seen. I was about to take off again when I saw a wild-looking thing running through the grass.

"It was apparently a German soldier. Before I could open my motor and get under way the running figure had overtaken me and with one bound he landed himself in the rear cockpit. I didn't know whether to turn around and let the fellow have a clip of shots from my automatic or just what. Then I heard his voice. He spoke in French. It was my spy all right; he had appropriated a German uniform for safety's sake, and hadn't had time to change.

"Back at le Cheppe, I told him how nearly he had come to being bounced off, but he only laughed. That was part of his day's work. And, by the way, he had done a beautiful piece of spying. I tried to make him tell me his name, but he wouldn't. We were

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convinced that he was an important somebody in the counter-espionage section of the French spy system.”*

Hall's book also relates how Jimmy Bach, another member of the same squadron, was captured by the enemy when performing one of these 'Special Missions.' On this occasion two aeroplanes were employed, each pilot taking a spy as passenger. Bach discussed the procedure with Sergeant Mangeot, the other aviator, and they agreed that only one machine should land at a time. Bach was, therefore, to remain aloft and keep a look-out while Mangeot deposited his spy, after which the sergeant would take off and remain on guard in the air until the second aeroplane could leave the ground.

Mangeot made what he presumed to be a perfect landing, for his spy left the machine and got away without any untoward incident. But when he taxied to take off, the aeroplane overturned and he was unable to crawl out. Bach saw what had happened and descended quickly; as soon as his spy had alighted, he left his machine with the engine running and hastened to help Mangeot.

He succeeded in pulling the wreckage aside and, to his relief, Mangeot emerged uninjured. They ran across the field and got into Bach's machine. As no Germans had appeared, their escape seemed certain, but luck was against them, for just as they were about to leave the ground their propeller struck a tree-stump hidden in the long grass.

It was an accident that might befall any aviator operating on unfamiliar ground, but the two pilots were trapped behind the German lines. They tried to make their way back, but were ultimately caught.

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The Germans had ample evidence that they had landed spies and decided to try them for espionage. It was the first and probably the only case of its kind, for it had to decide a question that did not arise when the laws of war were established that dealt with the treatment of spies.

Was an aviator who landed spies behind the enemy's lines himself guilty of espionage? The first court-martial at Laon was unable to reach a decision on the point, but at their second trial the airmen were acquitted. Their uniform protected them, and the principle was therefore definitely established that a spy's uniformed accomplice cannot be guilty of espionage. It was an interesting case, but probably neither Bach nor Mangeot enjoyed it.

Various types of spies were used for such missions. Often they were inhabitants of the occupied territory who could be landed in some district where they knew every stick and stone and could rely on friends to conceal them. Such a spy generally wore French uniform underneath his civilian clothing on the theory that if he found himself in a tight place he could discard his outer garments and emerge as a soldier entitled to be treated as a prisoner of war.

The French also employed many Alsatian deserters from the German army on spy missions. Familiar with German military etiquette, they could be trusted to act their parts perfectly, and were landed in German uniform so that they were ready to mingle with the enemy's troops. They, therefore, ran greater risks than the Frenchmen, for if they were caught, their doom was doubly sealed.

From the German point of view Colonel Nicolai gives us some interesting details concerning these methods of depositing spies behind the lines. In the year 1915 nine spies were caught, four of whom wore

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uniform, while five aeroplanes fell into German hands. Whenever a spy was caught, the Germans naturally sought to lay a trap for the aeroplane that was to pick him up, but with little success. Sometimes the machine was seen hovering in the air, but did not descend because there was no signal to indicate that the coast was clear.

Often, Colonel Nicolai states, the aeroplane did not put in an appearance, but he seems to be under a misapprehension when he accuses the French and British Intelligences of abandoning their agents. No doubt this error was purposely induced by a misleading statement from a captured French spy, who told his captors that aeroplanes were seldom sent to pick up spies as the procedure was accompanied with too much risk. This was probably a heroic effort on the part of the captured spy to protect his pilot by persuading the Germans to think that he would not come, and in any case we have Lieutenant Hall's testimony that he was sent to fetch back the spies he had landed.

On the other hand the nature of their work induced some spies to dispense with the aviator's service for the return journey. Those whose destination was the interior of Belgium found it more convenient to rely upon the assistance of the bands of amateur spies in the country, whose manifold achievements will form the subject of a later chapter. They provided the professional spies with shelter until a convenient occasion arose to guide them over the Dutch frontier.

In the last year of the war a new system was adopted, by which the spies were dropped from aeroplanes by means of parachutes. This procedure enabled the spy to land less conspicuously than was possible by the old method, but it had its risks. In several cases the parachutes failed to act, and the mangled bodies

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of the unfortunate agents were subsequently found by German patrols.

The French Intelligence Service found another ingenious method of using the talent for spying that might be latent in the inhabitants of territory in German occupation. For this the co-operation of an aviator was required, but instead of a human passenger he took with him a number of cages, each containing a couple of carrier-pigeons.

These birds he dropped over suitable localities, and as the cages had miniature parachutes attached to them, they floated down to earth. With each pair of pigeons was a supply of food and a letter for the finder.

It told him that although the fortunes of war prevented him from serving his country in the field, he might still do good service if he could arrange to send off the pigeons with any information he could glean concerning the movements of the German troops. A list of questions was given for him to answer to the best of his ability, and he was instructed how to handle the pigeons. Finally a small packet of banknotes demonstrated that France was ready to compensate him for his service and the risks she called upon him to undertake.

Many pigeons flew back with useful information. Some were shot down by German soldiers, who had instructions to fire at any bird in the air that they imagined to resemble a pigeon, and no doubt formed a welcome addition to some warrior's scanty diet. Others landed in the enemy's midst, and they too returned, bearing false information, specially concocted by some German Intelligence officer. Many unfortunate pigeons perished, because no one found them in time.

Later the French tried another ingenious method

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of harnessing the air to their service. This consisted in sending up a number of small balloons at times when the wind was blowing in a direction that would carry them over the occupied territory. Each bore on its flight a package containing the empty shells of three similar balloons that could be inflated with the ordinary gas used for lighting and cooking purposes. Such packages were released by an ingenious clock-work device that detached them from the carrier-balloon as soon as it had been a certain time in the air.

These balloons had the advantage of invisibility, which was denied to the pigeons. They were made of a fine but tough silk-paper, dyed light blue, and as their circumference was hardly more than two feet, they were imperceptible to the eye as soon as they reached a certain height. To the unfilled balloons they carried were attached lists of questions to be answered and precise directions how to inflate them, together with the customary payment for the sender.

Another advantage of the balloons was that they remained uninjured when they landed in lonely spots where they might not be picked up for several weeks, whereas the pigeons died unless retrieved soon after they reached earth. But they also possessed the drawback that the finder could not despatch them unless the wind was blowing in the right direction; consequently much of the information obtained by their use was out of date when it reached its destination.

The French also tried the experiment of transmitting small wireless sets to the occupied territory by means of their carrier-balloons, but it is not known whether this system proved effective.

Although the spy's feathered messengers, the carrier-pigeons, were therefore superseded by the French

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Intelligence in favour of mechanical devices, they rendered useful service elsewhere, particularly in Belgium. Most of the carrier-pigeons supplied to the Belgian amateur spies came from English lofts, and it is, therefore, only fitting that this chapter should pay a tribute to the man whose initiative was responsible for providing Intelligence with its winged couriers. His work is one of those remarkable achievements of the war that escaped notice as far as the public was concerned; it was overshadowed by the many spectacular events of those stirring times, but a clearer instance of 'the right man in the right place' than the late Lt.-Col. Alfred Henry Osman will be hard to find.

As a boy in his teens Osman adopted the study of homing pigeons as a hobby, and in 1888 he founded the celebrated Osman strain of racing pigeons. Later, in conjunction with the late J. W. Logan, M.P., he formed the National Flying Club for pigeons, in which he succeeded in interesting the late King Edward VII., then Prince of Wales, whose pigeon won the club's long-distance race that started at Lerwick in 1899. Osman also founded the journal known as the *Racing Pigeon*, and became its editor.

At the outbreak of war the police of all countries issued severe regulations to curtail the liberties of carrier-pigeons, which they feared would prove facile messengers for undetected enemy agents. Every loft in Great Britain was ordered to be sealed up, which meant that no carrier pigeon could obtain exercise, and strict tests were imposed to prove that the birds really belonged to the owners who claimed them.

Osman at once perceived that these regulations would cause many valuable birds to die for want of exercise if the war continued longer than a few months, and also realised that they could render good service

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to the country if allowed the use of their wings under proper conditions. He, therefore, decided to approach the Home Office in the matter.

He found the authorities willing to listen to his representations, which were forwarded to the War Office and Admiralty. So convincingly did he put the case for the pigeon that in November, 1914, he was called upon to organise a scheme for employing the birds of fanciers living near the coasts to bring in messages from mine-sweepers, and as this proved successful the naval authorities decided to extend the use of pigeons to all aeroplanes of the Royal Naval Air Service. This Government Pigeon Service, as it was called, was put under the control of Colonel Osman's son, Mr. W. H. Osman and Mr. F. Romer.

In 1915, the War Office appealed to Osman for a supply of pigeons for use on Intelligence Work in France. Osman accepted a commission as a captain in the army, but refused to take any payment for his services. His close contact with pigeon fanciers all over the country enabled him to obtain an unlimited supply of birds, most of which were given free of charge. The leading fanciers enlisted in the Government Pigeon Service, and the smaller fry were not slow to follow, with the result that all birds required for service abroad could be sent to their destination in the charge of experts. The need for pigeons increased so rapidly that Osman soon became a Colonel, with control over every loft in Great Britain and the duty of supplying Intelligence with all the birds needed. He drew up a scheme that enabled the fanciers who remained in England to train their birds and give them sufficient exercises to keep them healthy, he arranged for the reception and despatch of all pigeons required for Intelligence and took personal charge of the Home Forces Pigeon Services.

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The demand grew greater as the war progressed, but Osman saw to it that the supply never failed. At the end of the war he was made an O.B.E., and the members of the National Homing Union presented him with a testimonial for his services. But the value of Osman's pigeons to the spies of Belgium can never be estimated at its true worth.

For obvious reasons the Germans never tried to land spies behind the French or British lines. A Frenchman transported by air to the occupied territory landed among friends ready to assist and shelter him, whereas a German put down on the French side would have arrived in the midst of a hostile population. But the following episode quoted from Lieutenant Hall's memoirs shows that the Germans were quite ready on occasions to take a leaf out of their opponents' book.

"With the arrival of the new Nieuports, I made my second Special Mission—the one that nearly finished me off. We left the field as usual in the very early morning, flying a Morane. I didn't like the looks of the spy they had given me; he had shifty eyes. I distrusted him. But we flew away and landed without mishap on the grass-grown field near Rocroi. He had the usual box of pigeons, and on landing, he hopped out and scurried off to the woods. That part of it was according to Hoyle. But the return! They nearly knocked me off. The only thing that saved my life was the poor shooting of those German gunners.

"It was another early morning flight in a Morane-Saulnier. We had, as usual, received a message by carrier-pigeon to pick up the spy, and as far as one could tell, everything was going off exactly all right. Just as I was about to land, I took a tour of the field down very low, instead of slipping in with a cut

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switch and taking a chance of starting the motor again at the last moment. The tour of that field was what saved me, because it warmed up my motor and also took me to a slightly different position on the field. If I had landed in the spot I had used for my three previous attempts, it would have been fatal.

"I have always believed that that spy was a Counter-Espion working for the Germans. Captain Bouche was later advised by headquarters that our spy had been captured and had given out the details of my return trip, perhaps in the hope that he would not be executed. All this matters very little to me. I can only remember what happened on the landing field at Rocroi. As I said before, I took a tour of the field and then came down for my landing. Suddenly, from the woods ahead of me, there was a burst of machine gun fire. After that they shot at me with everything in the German Army. If they had only waited till my machine rolled to a stop, I would have been easy meat for them. But, as usual, the Germans, from the Generals and Chiefs of staff down to the lowest private, never know when they're winning. So they opened up on me a little bit too soon. In fact, I hadn't touched the ground yet.

"All I did was to give my motor the gun and zoom up as far as possible out of the way. My wings looked liked a sieve. I had a small wound in my thigh. And, mind you, all this happened in less than fifteen seconds, because as soon as I zoomed, they had to change the angle of their machine gun fire almost 180 degrees. This meant that they would have to turn around and wait till I had passed over them, and then fire at me from the rear.

"Of course, I got away, but there was some cold perspiration on my brow, and a good many mouthfuls of profanity on my lips. If ever I see that spy again

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and have a shootin' iron handy, it's going to be Kingdom Come. I'll perforate that baby's hide and make him like it. His figure'll look like my wings when I landed back at La Cheppe. The Captain said, 'Well, where's the spy?'

"I shook my head. The Captain looked back in the rear cockpit. I pointed to my perforated wings. The Captain understood. He was a war-wise fellow, that Captain of ours, and we liked him for it, too.

"That was my last Special Mission."*

Hall's suspicions were probably right. His passenger appears to have been a German spy, who utilised the opportunity to get a free and safe ride back to his own headquarters.

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CHAPTER VII

THE DRUDGERY OF SPYING

Although even the spy who serves their cause is still viewed with a certain mistrust by many people, a halo of romance surrounds his work. He is the man who plays the lone hand, who ventures at the risk of his life into the enemy's land, where a thousand dangers encompass him on every side. At any moment an incautious word or gesture may betray him ; then follows the firing-party and the nameless grave. At his own headquarters the final act of his tragedy is played, when his name is crossed off from the register of his Intelligence Service, usually with the grim, significant comment : "missing ; further particulars unknown." Or else he returns in triumph, bearing vital information that enables his country's forces to win some great victory, though he receives no other recognition of his feat than a few words of thanks from his chief, coupled with the offer of another dangerous mission as soon as he is rested from his labours.

That is the man in the street's image of the spy, and undoubtedly there are some agents that resemble it in many particulars. They are men who can speak half a dozen languages with the same fluency as their own, and possess the power of assuming a score of different personalities at will, even though they do not use the false beards and theatrical grease-paint

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still so beloved of many writers of fiction. There are also female spies who employ their personal charms as effectively as any 'vamp' of stage or screen; even when stripped of the legends that have accumulated round her personality, the tragic episode of Mata Hari is hardly to be surpassed by any tale emanating from an author's brain.

The man who matches his wits against the host of enemy counterspies and the woman whose fascinating wiles compel her victims to yield up their secrets undoubtedly exist, but they are the star turns of espionage. In the shadowy background behind them toil whole armies of spy 'supers,' whose work, taken in its aggregate, is of inestimable value to the countries they serve, though they receive but little credit for it save in the silent, grateful recognition of their chiefs. Much of their labour is performed under conditions of perfect safety, at least so far as enemy violence is concerned, and the only death that threatens them is that resulting from overwork, for Trade Union hours do not exist for them. They are the drudges of espionage.

Let us examine, for instance, the work of Captain H., who was attached to the staff of a British Consulate in a Swiss town. In addition to his official duties, which consisted mainly of interviewing applicants for visas, he had the task of learning all there was to be known about British subjects resident in or visiting the town and district. In wartime every country has good reason to keep sharp watch on the movements of its own nationals in neutral lands, so that he probably discovered some interesting facts in the course of this work.

His daily round had its humorous side. The war brought to neutral countries all sorts of queer fish, who were interesting and amusing subjects to any

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student of human nature, but perhaps Captain H. had little leisure for such studies. His job was to get all possible information concerning their past lives, and not all of them were disposed to give it to him.

On many occasions he sat up till the early hours of the morning, drinking glass for glass with some man whose conversation bored him, in the hope that alcohol might loosen his subject's tongue. Often he suspected that the odds were a thousand to one against his procuring information of the least value, but he dared not neglect the thousandth chance, and so he continued to drink when he would have liked to have been in bed, resting for the labours of the next heavy day. And sometimes, when he was rewarded by the disclosure of some news item that seemed to him worth the trouble it had cost to acquire, it was filed away in an official pigeon-hole, where it lay unheeded until the world was at peace once more.

Captain H.'s military knowledge was of practical use to him when he was called upon to interview the German deserters who visited the British Consulate. At one period of the war they were very numerous, for as an oasis of peace in the very heart of the conflict Switzerland teemed with fugitives from the armies of the four belligerent nations on her frontiers. Many Germans, Austrians, French and Italians who had passed the greater part of their lives within the confines of the Helvetian Republic, were called up to their respective armies at the commencement of hostilities, and when in due course they revisited their homes on leave, a goodly number declined to return to the front. Why, they reasoned, should they go back to the perils and hardships of the trenches, to which no one could force them to return? The only penalty that could be inflicted on them was that of life-long banishment from their official countries, a

There were, in fact, so many desertions among the men whose homes lay in Switzerland, that eventually the military authorities of the belligerent countries refused to allow them across the frontiers. There is, however, an amusing story current concerning a German who had won the Iron Cross for a deed of valour and was therefore regarded as a hero who could be trusted to return to his place in the trenches at the appointed hour. But his commanding officer was rudely deceived, for the valiant warrior remained calmly in Switzerland, announcing to all and sundry that "a bit of old iron was not going to turn him into a mug."

But the forbidden frontier still exercised its fascinations on war-weary men, so that in spite of all precautions it proved impossible to bar all the entrances into the Swiss haven of peace. Germans swam the Rhine or wormed their way through the barbed wire barriers around Basel and Schaffhausen, Frenchmen crossed the Lake of Geneva in skiffs, Austrians and Italians stole through the mountain passes. Week by week the number of deserters grew and grew.

Thus there came into Switzerland many men who had not known the land in time of peace. Impelled by some chance of proximity to the frontier, they had succeeded in winning their way across it, but most of them were penniless and friendless when they arrived. They had to begin new lives in a strange country under adverse conditions.

Under such circumstances the former enemy becomes a friend in the eyes of the deserter. The

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German soldier who has quitted the trenches for a life of peace in Switzerland feels that he has done the Entente a service in reducing the number of their opponents by one. It is a good turn that deserves another, he decides, and so, still in his field-grey uniform, he strolls into the British or French Consulate, states his case and asks for assistance.

Now British Consulates have not been established for the purpose of assisting German deserters, as Captain H. plainly tells his man. But he takes time over the telling, asks a discreet question here and there and finally hints that reliable military information is a commodity which receives payment at face value in ready cash.

It is, however, no easy matter to gain reliable military information from such men. Some are still moved by lingering scruples of shame at the idea of betraying their country, while others are ready to draw upon the powers of their imagination to make themselves interesting. But Captain H. is tactful, and in the end the German departs with a trifle in his pocket.

Then Captain H. rings up the French Consulate, for by old experience he knows that the man who has just left him will call there too, and perhaps tell quite a different story if he sees the possibility of financial gain. Later he may visit the Italian Consulate with yet another tale, if he is a good actor with a vivid imagination.

Much of the information Captain H. acquires from these deserters would have been valuable if it had come his way a fortnight earlier. But now it is hopelessly out of date, and the only gain to the British taxpayer is a little goodwill, for the deserter he has rewarded will send along fellows of his kind, one of whom may perhaps have a tale worth the telling.

But sometimes Captain H. or his French colleague find the man they want, the intelligent fellow with a grievance against his own government and strong views on the folly of war. He has already harangued other deserters on the subject; they look upon him as a leader, so that he is in a position to collect quite a lot of information if well paid for his trouble. To such a man Captain H. hints that money can be earned in easier fashion than by daily toil as a labourer, and if his listener is sympathetic he goes on to tell him of the large sums waiting for the man who will undertake special missions across the frontier. False papers will naturally be provided for him. The man hesitates; life in Switzerland, the land of peace, is not quite so easy as he imagined, for prices are rising daily and certain employers seem to have a prejudice against employing deserters. But finally he consents, and another German deserter is turned into an Entente spy.

Yet this new recruit to Intelligence is a heavy burden on those poor shoulders of Captain H. True, he is a good judge of character, but let him make assurance doubly sure before he clinches with his man, for the German Intelligence Staff in Bern, where the wily Count von Romberg reigns, are fully aware of Captain H.'s activities. One day there will stroll into his office a deserter who is not a deserter, though he has a moving tale to tell and seems just the sharp sort of fellow with the requisite grievance

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against his government that Captain H. needs. His words carry conviction ; he is asked to call again ; at the third or perhaps the fifth interview he is engaged, and another German counterspy has succeeded in worming his way into the British Intelligence Service.

To return to Captain H.'s work in connection with his own countrymen, we have seen that he is in a position where he has to eye them with suspicion until he is personally convinced of their loyalty. This is a matter of some difficulty, for men's conceptions of loyalty vary widely. There are many, for instance, whom no sum could tempt to impart to the enemy the tiniest scrap of military information they have heard from some officer on leave, but who would not hesitate for a second about selling to that same enemy large consignments of the goods he requires, if they have the stocks to supply him.

'After all,' they solve their consciences, 'I can do with the cash this deal will bring me in, and it will make no difference to what happens at the front.' And then they make the further excuse that 'officially the stuff is going to X., who is a Swiss and a neutral. We don't know definitely that he will pass it on to the Germans, and it is not our business to enquire.'

During the war the prosecutions for 'Trading with the Enemy' reached an alarmingly high figure, but it is a human weakness for a business man to grasp at the chance of a little extra profit which will not affect the result of the war.

All down the ages men have traded with the enemy in every war. The ancient Greeks seem to have behaved very much in the same way as the men of to-day, if we may judge from the lines in the 'Frogs,' that satirical comedy of Aristophanes, written and produced during the time when Athens was at war with Sparta. The poet has some scathing criticisms on

At that time Athens, owning the superior navy, was blockading Sparta and her allies. The island of Aegina, a dependency of Athens, faced the Corinthian coast, so that it would have been an easy matter on a dark night to run cargoes of goods past the blockading fleet and land them at the port of Epidaurus, where the pro-Spartan Corinthians would have taken charge of them. It all sounds very up-to-date, though the play was produced in the year 405, B.C.

Captain H., who may well have had an Athenian prototype, was one of the little cogs in the mighty mechanism of the blockade that contributed largely to Germany's downfall. But the blockade did not begin to tell effectively against the Central Powers until every gap had been closed by the system of 'commercial espionage' evolved to meet the special needs of twentieth century warfare.

In August, 1914, it was generally supposed that Germany would be unable to feed her population and keep her industries going if deprived of her imports from overseas by the blockading British fleet. Unless she could win the war in the first few weeks by inflicting decisive defeats on the allied forces arrayed against her on two fronts, it seemed only a question of time before she was starved into surrender.

* Taken from Professor Gilbert Murray's translation.

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So our newspapers wrote, but they forgot the gaps in the wall of blood and iron encircling the Central Powers. Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Switzerland, and, for a time, Italy and Rumania, were free passages through which Germany could draw her precious supplies, and the 'Trading with the Enemy Act,' which had served the country well enough in the Napoleonic era, was hopelessly antiquated for conditions of modern warfare.

By virtue of this Act a neutral or even a British subject resident in Germany was an enemy with whom commercial intercourse was as strictly forbidden as with a German national. On the other hand a German established in a neutral country was a neutral for purposes of trade. This system worked well enough a hundred years ago, for in the days of sailing vessels a Frenchman in New York or China was off the map as far as intercourse with his own country was concerned, and any commercial transactions he might have with a British subject brought no gain to France.

But the modern inventions of steamship, railway, telegraph, telephone, wireless, aeroplane, etc., changed everything. They gave Germany facilities to make purchases in every quarter of the globe, which duly reached her via her intermediaries in neutral lands. The 'Trading with the Enemy Act' forbade the export of British goods to neutral countries only when the seller had reason to suspect that their ultimate destination was enemy territory, but in most cases the dealer, being human, took care not to enquire too closely. He left to the Public Prosecutor the onus of proving an offence, and proof was difficult without an effective staff of commercial spies to furnish the evidence.

Moreover the business men of the neutral countries saw no reason why they should refrain from selling

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to Germany any goods they could lay hands on. It was not their war, and there were good profits to be made.

It may not be generally known that in October, 1914, Germany was so desperately short of copper for munition purposes that she saw herself compelled to sue for peace unless further supplies could be procured. For several weeks the munition factories could only carry on by the response obtained from an appeal to the patriotism of every householder in the country to hand over all the copper ornaments and utensils in his possession. Melted down, these supplies sufficed until large consignments of copper came in from America, via Sweden, and Germany was saved.

Now had the blockading British fleet possessed positive proof that these copper cargoes were destined for Germany, they would have been confiscated. But the papers were in order, the consignments were addressed to Swedish firms, and whatever the Naval officers who examined the ships suspected, they were unable to prove their suspicions. Had they taken the ships and cargoes as prizes to some British port, there would have been a loud outcry in neutral newspapers about 'the tyrant of the seas trampling on the rights of defenceless neutrals.' The American traders with Germany would have protested furiously at the loss of their business, and there would have followed an acrimonious interchange of diplomatic notes between Britain and the United States concerning the different conceptions of blockades and contraband. At that period we found it politic refrain from offering America any unnecessary provocation.

In November and December, 1914, Germany imported over 12,000 tons of copper from America, via Sweden, and a few typical statistics will show how she drew other vital supplies from neutral coun-

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tries as well as the difficulties that beset Britain when she tried to enforce a strict blockade.

In the autumn of 1914, Germany found her stocks of oleaginous substances running low, so that she foresaw herself unable to maintain her manufacture of glycerine, one of the principle components of that deadly explosive, nitro-glycerine. The oil used for the fabrication of glycerine is mainly extracted from nuts imported from the East Indies, West Africa and South America.

In 1915, Denmark imported 75,000 tons of these nuts, in 1916, 80,000 tons. Her normal requirements were 23,000 tons, so it is obvious that the balance must have gone to Germany.

In 1913, 286 tons of cotton reached Germany, via Sweden, in 1915, 76,000 tons.

In 1913, Sweden imported 109 tons of tea from India and Ceylon, and Norway 78 tons. Their figures for 1916 were 2,952 and 1,176 tons respectively.

The figures for foodstuffs reaching Germany, via Denmark, for two years are significant :

	1913 Tons	1915 Tons
Fish ..	25,516	106,694
Jams ..	134	19,758
Cheese ..	57	4,344
Eggs ..	1,160	20,422
Lard ..	72	6,794
Butter ..	11,317	36,891

The jumps in these figures were largely due to forward buying by German merchants, who thus made a corner in foodstuffs that would have normally gone to England. When the British commercial espionage system was eventually established in Denmark, the agents reported that the Danes had sent so much

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home-made food to Germany that they had to import from America to feed their own population.

The time came when Britain decided to exercise a stricter control over the foodstuffs and raw materials consigned from America to the neutral countries bordering on Germany. In the United States commercial spies, mainly members of British firms over there, acquired all possible information concerning the cargoes of boats bound for neutral European ports, while in Europe another set of spies traced the ultimate destinations of the goods after they had reached their nominal consignees. At the end of the war their work was gratefully recognised by their chief, who stated that they had furnished all the evidence which enabled the prize courts to condemn the captured ships that carried contraband.

The commercial spy's work called for the exercise of tact and forbearance. The Entente had no wish to promote unfriendly feeling in neutral countries by forcing them to go short of necessary commodities; there was not even a desire to penalise the traders who had already sold goods to Germany. But henceforth all such transactions were to cease.

The problem was to find out which importers disposed of their purchases for use in their own country and which forwarded them to Germany. The former were to be inconvenienced as little as possible, and the latter also, provided that their harmful activities could be restrained.

The commercial spy who procured this information had a wearisome and odious task. He was accused of poking his nose into other folks' businesses, of trying to acquire unlawful knowledge of trade secrets for his own profit and of intent to ruin neutral merchants for the benefit of his own countrymen. His work was indeed the drudgery of espionage, but he performed

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his duties as tactfully and unobtrusively as he could.

As the result of his reports a Black List came into operation in the summer of 1916. All neutral merchants who sent goods to the Central Powers were not allowed to receive any further consignments from America. Their compatriots were requested not to pass on to them any goods that they received from Entente lands or the U.S.A., and the penalty for non-compliance was the addition of their own names to the Black List. The neutral buyers of Europe soon saw that trade with Germany was likely to have serious consequences for their own firms and yielded with the best grace they could muster.

On the whole those who still persisted in transactions with German houses took the Black List in a sporting spirit. If they could contrive to deliver to Germany unnoticed any of the precious consignments she needed, there were huge gains to be won, (a barrel of lubricating oil that reached Germany from Denmark was paid for in 1917 at ten times its peace rate), if the offender was detected, it was only part of the game. But, as one addition to the Black List ruefully remarked, the English commercial spies had eyes everywhere.

When the United States entered the war, the work of the blockading fleet became easier. Hitherto the American merchant had been attracted by the prevailing high prices to trade with Germany to the utmost of his ability, but now severe pains and penalties restricted him. Nevertheless German ingenuity contrived to procure many commodities by devious means.

Late in 1917, for instance, it was reported that large quantities of copper were finding their way into Germany. The evidence pointed to Sweden as the country of transit, but the commercial spies there were at a loss to account for the manner in which

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the enemy received his supplies. The one thing certain was that no consignments of raw copper left any Swedish port.

The commercial spies received instructions to trace all the various uses to which the Swedish firms were putting the copper they received from America. After a while their attention was attracted by a large factory that took considerable quantities of copper to manufacture plaques, vases and other ornaments.

The firm seemed to do a flourishing business; in fact its turnover was found to be considerably larger than Sweden's internal trade warranted. If the total output was sold retail, calculated the British commercial spies, every Swedish household must have at least twenty specimens of this firm's goods. But judicious enquiries soon showed that no Swedish retail house had large dealings with it, while only few of its copper goods were displayed in shops. Once again the commercial spies began to investigate the cargoes of vessels plying between Sweden and Germany.

They found that practically the whole of the suspected firm's output was being forwarded to Germany in the form of small consignments of manufactured goods. On reaching the German ports they were despatched to Essen, where they were stripped of their superfluous trimmings, and the copper handed over to the munition factories. Needless to say, the offending firm was promptly entered on the Black List.

In 1918 the system of commercial espionage reached such a high pitch of efficiency that the following incident occurred. A German business man had occasion to visit Switzerland and thought he would profit by his sojourn there to acquire some new suits of clothes. His own garments were almost threadbare, because no cloth was obtainable for love or money in Germany. Before the war the Fatherland

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had imported large quantities of cloth from England, and every fashionable tailor was in the habit of advertising his garments as exclusively cut from 'englische Stoffe.' But now no cloth came from England, and all the home-made material was required for the army. Civilians had to manage as best they could until the war was over.

The visitor to Switzerland was rather a dandy where clothes were concerned, and as he had done well in his business, his heart rejoiced at the thought of the well-cut garments of good *englische Stoffe* he proposed to acquire. He marched into a Zürich tailoring establishment and gave his order.

"I beg your pardon, *mein Herr*, but are you not a German?" enquired the proprietor.

"Certainly," replied his would-be customer, with some surprise.

"And from Germany? You do not live in Switzerland?"

The visitor admitted that this was the case.

"Then, *mein Herr*, I regret I cannot serve you."

As soon as the German had recovered from his amazement, he blurted out that his money was as good as anyone else's and asked irately why there should be a prejudice against his nationality. Was he not in a Swiss shop, and was not Switzerland neutral?

"There is no prejudice, *mein Herr*," explained the tailor. "I am indeed myself a German, but we import all our cloth from England and we are severely rationed so that we receive only what we need for our local customers. If you were a German residing in some other Swiss town, I could serve you, but a German from Germany, no. The English spies would hear of it at once; then my name would go on their damned Black List. I should receive no more cloth, and my business would be ruined."

THE DRUDGERY OF SPYING

Trivial though this incident may seem, its significance is far-reaching. Many German writers who are in a position to speak with authority, do not ascribe their country's surrender to the defeat of the German armies, who were retreating in good order to make a stand on the Rhine, but to the undermining of the civilian population's will to hold out to the bitter end. This was done by the Entente propaganda and the privations entailed by the Blockade.

Petty irritations sometimes cause greater depression of spirit than severe hardships, and it may well be that the man who had to return to Germany in his shabby clothes went home with his powers of resistance broken. If so, his was one of the myriad cases for which the patient drudgery of Britain's commercial spies deserves the credit.*

In the propaganda line a remarkable piece of work which, in spite of its drudgery must have been a labour of love, was the forgery of an issue of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* carried out by British Intelligence agents in Zürich. It may well be described as a masterpiece.

In the latter years of the war propaganda played a great part in the destruction of the enemy's morale. As the German press was under strict censorship and dared not print any article of a 'defeatist' nature, the Entente Governments took their own measures to

* This assertion is borne out by a recent letter to the *Times* from the pen of that well-known economic expert, Sir Leo Chiozza Money, who served on the advisory committee of the authorities responsible for the Blockade and initiated the economic strategy that became the successful policy of the British and Allied Governments. In his communication to our leading newspaper Sir Leo Chiozza Money asserts that 'the pressure of the economic blockade, which at one and the same time reduced the German soldier to firing shells ringed with copper instead of iron and deprived all Germans, whether soldiers or civilians, of fats and even coffee and tobacco, was one of the chief causes, if not the main cause, of the German defeat, and this economic victory preceded the military victory.'

Coming from such high authority this statement must receive due attention.

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acquaint the German people with the true state of affairs. Masses of leaflets were printed, some of which were dropped by aviators passing over Germany, while others were distributed by spies. These leaflets, which endeavoured to show both the German soldier and the German civilian how his Government was bolstering him up with false hopes of a victory that could never be achieved, were so effective in their appeal that the German authorities imposed severe penalties on anyone found harbouring or distributing them.

But convincing as this type of propaganda was, it had the disadvantage that the reader knew it to be of Entente origin, and his mind was, therefore, bound to cherish a certain prejudice against it. If, reasoned Intelligence, we can deliver a piece of defeatist propaganda that appears to originate from German sources, its effect will be far greater. Whereupon some clever brain hit upon the idea of forging a number of a German newspaper.

At first the project seemed impossible, but when they talked it over, things began to take shape. A printing press, the first necessity was easily procurable, as the commercial spies in Zürich were already on friendly terms with a weekly trade journal, printed in German, that endeavoured to make clear to Swiss business men the advantages of an Entente victory.

The newspaper they decided to forge was the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, a journal of liberal tendencies that enjoys in its own land a reputation similar to that of the *Manchester Guardian* in England. It had always been characterised by the moderate tone of its political articles, and on several occasions it had printed leaders that enabled those who could read between the lines to divine that its editorial staff did not always see eye to eye with the die-hards of the German Government.

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A defeatist article in the political columns of such a paper would, therefore, carry due weight.

The first task was to find paper indistinguishable from that used by the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, the second to set up type similar to that on which the German journal was printed. These difficulties are greater than they may seem to the casual reader, for no two newspapers use absolutely the same kind of type and paper. With a little practice anyone can learn to pick out from newspaper cuttings the handiwork of the *Times*, the *Morning Post*, the *Daily Mail* or the *Daily Express*, and Sherlock Holmes' boast that from the tiniest scrap of printed matter he could identify the newspaper to which it belonged, is not unreasonable.

But Intelligence succeeded in finding a paper and type that would have deceived the oldest compositor of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, and the rest was easy. The amateur printers turned out a copy of the *Zweites Morgenblatt* (Second Morning Edition) of Tuesday, July 31st, 1917, that was identical to the last advertisement with the original in every respect, save one—the leading article on the front page.

This bore a title "*Um des teuren deutschen Bluts und Vaterlands willen*" (for the sake of our dear German blood and our Fatherland) that might equally well have headed a jingoistic tirade. The casual observer would have passed it by without suspicion.

But a German reader's eyes would have opened widely when he read the statement that the recent German defeats on the western front would cause the war to drag on for many weary years. The Government's promises of peace by Christmas were, therefore, a cruel deception. At the front men's lives were being sacrificed to no purpose: in Germany women and children were dying of starvation. "Help us to

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bring pressure on our authorities to sign an honourable peace while there is still time. Act to-day ; to-morrow may be too late," the article concluded.

A bundle of these forged papers was sent to the front to be dropped by the airmen engaged on propaganda work, while others were smuggled by British agents into a goods train bound from Germany. What the immediate effect was, we cannot tell, for though the results of propaganda are insidious and far-reaching, they are usually too vague and indefinite for their authors to measure the precise value of this or that piece of work.

But of the success of the Entente's defeatist propaganda in Germany, taken as a whole, there is no possible doubt, for Colonel Nicolai himself pays a tribute to its devastating effects on the *morale* of the German nation. "We were defeated behind the front" he admits in his book, "*Geheime Machte*," and goes on to blame his own Government for not having adopted similar measures.

The Germans also tried propaganda by means of leaflets, but Colonel Nicolai characterises their efforts as so clumsy that they were doomed to swift failure. Leaflets were printed in English and French, but they contained so many mis-spellings and grammatical faults that even the most casual reader recognised their German origin. They were hastily withdrawn from circulation to prevent Germany becoming a laughing-stock in the eyes of the world, and somewhere in the basements of a Government building in Berlin there still lies stack upon stack of leaflets that cost so much time and money to prepare, now left to moulder unheeded.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HUMOURS OF SPYING

Like every other profession, the spy's has its humorous episodes, but by its very nature they are often of a grim type, as in the case of the unfortunate Müller, who was executed in the Tower of London in the summer of 1915.

Müller, a Russian subject, was captured in Newcastle whither he had gone to pick up information concerning the movements of the British fleet in the North Sea. Born in the Baltic port of Libau, he possessed sufficient naval technical knowledge to render him really useful to his employers, with whom he communicated by a code of advertisements inserted in certain English provincial newspapers. These he forwarded to a correspondent in Holland.

The clumsiness of a confederate betrayed Müller to the detectives of Scotland Yard. In due course he was courtmartialled and shot, while several newspapers containing specimens of his veiled messages were sent to the code experts of the famous 'Room 40' and duly solved. Müller's code was ingenious, but 'Room 40' had tackled harder puzzles than the one he gave them, and after a little while the British Intelligence Service were furnished with the key.

Now the German Intelligence heads had no knowledge of Müller's execution, which was kept secret, and they had no particular reason to infer the tragedy from his silence, for it is one of the first principles of

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spying that an agent working in an enemy country must lie low for a time if he has reason to suspect that his opponents' counterspies are on his track. He suspends operations and even refrains from communication with his employers.

The German Intelligence Service, therefore, presumed that Müller had scented danger and dropped out of the game until such time as he could safely resume. For a while they were allowed to continue in this belief.

But as the British Intelligence service now knew the name of Müller's correspondent in Amsterdam, they concocted a budget of information for the enemy and despatched it by the usual code. To their joy they found that the late spy had been paid by results, for a substantial sum of money reached the Deptford address of Peter Hahn, the Anglo-German accomplice whose carelessness had betrayed Müller and who now was expiating his share in the business by a sentence of seven years penal servitude.

The news was evidently acceptable to the gentleman, in Amsterdam, and a few weeks later another report was concocted, which likewise elicited a cash reward. So the game went on, the Intelligence agents entrusted with the job of supplying false information to their opposite numbers chuckling heartily every time the spy's remittances reached them.

The idea of the Germans being made to pay for misleading information from their non-existent agent was so amusing that in time its inventors overdid their despatches, and the defunct Müller received a sharp intimation that his reports were so unreliable that no further payments could be made until confirmation was forthcoming from other sources. So Müller ceased to correspond with his friend in Amsterdam, but the British Intelligence agents took

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from a special account the sum of £400, that the enemy had been kind enough to present to them, and bought a motor-car which they christened 'The Muller.' Its period of service lasted considerably longer than those of its namesake, and its memory will linger long in the minds of those who happened to participate in this grim but profitable jest.

Another grim joke, which was not attended with any personal tragedy, kept all Switzerland laughing for several months, and it is still a mystery why the German Intelligence agents were so slow in supplying the information that would have put an end to it.

In 1917 both sides found their munition supplies unequal to the demands of their armies in the field and were compelled to seek new sources of replenishment. Independently, but almost simultaneously, they hit on the idea of establishing munition factories in neutral countries.

In Switzerland the watchmaking industry of Geneva, Neuchâtel and Biel suffered from a heavy slump as they were cut off from their principal markets, and the directors of several firms were therefore happy to close with offers made by one or other belligerent. There was at first some opposition on pacifistic grounds from the Swiss Socialist Party, but the hard fact that the war had thrown large numbers of workers out of employment was a cogent argument that they could not ignore. The men were only too happy at the idea of fresh work, and soon munition factories were in full swing. In one case the edifying spectacle was witnessed of two firms with adjacent premises working for opposite sides ; the output of one went northward to Basel, whence they were conveyed to the German armies, while the other works sent its deadly products southward to Geneva, where they crossed the frontier and in due course reached the French guns.

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But as Switzerland has neither coal nor iron mines, she has always been dependent on Germany for supplies of these minerals. Despite the inroads on her manpower occasioned by the demands of the front, Germany had still found it convenient to serve her neutral neighbour with coal and iron, because she was able to institute a system of barter by means of which she received large quantities of Swiss butter, milk and cheese in exchange for the minerals.

No conditions had been stipulated as to the uses to which the minerals should be put, for hitherto no occasion had arisen to question the purposes they served. The fact that their coals warmed the premises of the British Legation at Bern and British Consulates in every large Swiss town was a minor matter which the Germans could afford to overlook.

But it seems really amazing that the German agents in Switzerland could be blind to the fact that all the coal and iron used in factories supplying munitions to the Entente was being drawn from Germany. The factory workers knew it, and laughed about it daily; it was a humorous topic that never failed to raise a smile in the most depressing times. From the munition towns the joke spread all over Switzerland.

The Entente munition factories must have received their German supplies for at least three months before the Swiss board that negotiated the import of these raw materials received a sharp intimation that further consignments could only be permitted on the condition that they were not distributed among factories working for Germany's enemies. Whether Intelligence was at fault or whether its reports had to pass through many Government offices before the necessary order could be issued, it is hard to say. Probably the latter is the more correct surmise; red tape is at home in any country.

There were also the 'stateless' persons, men and women who had no claim to a passport from any country. Previous to 1914 this deficiency had caused them no inconvenience, but as soon as hostilities commenced they found themselves suspected on all sides and were happy to reach some quiet haven of neutrality. Their antithesis was the person with a double nationality; Captain H., mentioned in the previous chapter, once admitted that his pet bugbears were Cypriots.

Prior to 1914 the island of Cyprus was a nominal Turkish possession with a Greek population, governed by Britain. In the Near East Greeks have a just reputation for business acumen, and a local proverb says that it takes ten Jews to cheat a Greek. Cypriot Greeks proved their wiliness during the war, for they soon realised that they were in a position to pose as members of either side. There were quite a number of Cypriots in Switzerland, most of whom were engaged in finance, and they usually found it convenient to own both a British and a Turkish passport. Both sides used them as spies, but found them too fickle in their allegiance to be of any real value to their employers.

But the most curious case of mixed nationality that came to the notice of Intelligence was a certain K., who was born in Martinique (French West Indies)

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of German parents. For some unknown reason the language in which he expressed himself most fluently was English, and officially he was a citizen of the principality of Monaco.

K. was an object of suspicion all round ; if he associated with Germans, the rumour went around that he was an English or French spy ; if he became intimate with any member of the Entente states, the latter in due course received a warning to beware of him as a German agent. Undoubtedly the Intelligences of both sides put themselves to a lot of unnecessary trouble on poor K.'s behalf, for he was far too worried by the embarrassments of his Gilbertian status to adopt any other attitude than that of strict neutrality to all parties.

Wartime Switzerland also contained many foreigners whose nationality was definite enough, but whose business or profession seemed decidedly vague. Some of them were pacifists who preferred to reside in a neutral country for the duration of the war, while others found Switzerland an excellent base for profiteering operations. But the man whom his neighbours could not place as either a pacifist or a profiteer was an object of suspicion all round, though few were bold enough to ask the awkward question : " What are you doing in Switzerland at this time ? "

But one bright American was once asked the fatal question by an indiscreet lady, and replied, to her consternation : " Oh, I'm a spy." Whether he really was a secret agent of any country, history does not relate, but, if so, he was a disciple of the famous Bismarck, who avowed that he always told the plain unvarnished truth whenever he desired to deceive his adversaries. It is a curious trait of humanity that while the wildest rumours are eagerly swallowed in times of crisis, the truth seldom finds acceptance.

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This refusal to credit the truth was as persistent with hard-headed staff officers at the front as among the civilian masses, who were only too pleased to be gulled.

There is no doubt that the British tanks that caused such a surprise when they first appeared on the battlefield were seen by German spies in England, but the German G.H.Q. steadfastly refused to believe in their existence until the new-fangled monsters came into action. Even then they remained a myth to those who had not seen them; one of the first was blown to pieces by a direct hit, and the sole survivor of the crew was so shattered by his experiences that in a state of hysteria lasting for many days he told his captors practically every detail of the construction of the new war-machine. So accurate was his description that the German engineers made a model from it, but the report that Intelligence sent to the War Office at Berlin was contemptuously tossed aside as too incredible for belief.

In the same way an Alsatian deserter who reached the French trenches with full details of a forthcoming German attack was listened to with incredulity. His story sounded to his interrogators too full and accurate to be true; they suspected him of being a German spy as several German agents were believed to have operated successfully in that part of the line under the guise of Alsatian deserters. They sent their prisoner to the base under close guard and foolishly paid no attention to his reiterated warnings. The German attack came off punctually to the minute, and the French took a very bad beating.

From occupied Belgium comes rather a gruesome, if humorous, tale, which bears eloquent testimony to the determined resistance offered by the Belgians to their invaders.

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In Holland, not far from the banks of the Scheldt, lies the little hamlet of Baar-le-Nassau, which is Belgian soil although a few miles distant from the actual frontier and entirely surrounded by Dutch territory. It is an enclave that by some vagary of history has been assigned to Belgian sovereignty, though geographically it ought to belong to Holland. The Belgians found this village an ideal base for espionage, as it was fairly easy at the beginning of the war for the inhabitants of the occupied territory to slip across the few miles of Dutch fields, and men of military age who had escaped to join the army usually stopped there to give an account of all they had seen and heard to a Belgian staff officer. In this fashion much valuable information reached the Entente Intelligences.

But as the war dragged on, the Germans consolidated their position in Belgium and began to pay more attention to the enemy's spy-posts. A triple fence of electrified wire was put up all along the line of the frontier, which was watched by a chain of sentinels, so that only the most determined spies could get across. The activities at Baar-le-Nassau dwindled.

But later in the war this enclave began to attract German notice in another fashion, for many aged Belgians expressed a desire on their death-beds to be buried there. Their surviving relatives then asked the German authorities for permission to cross the frontier and inter the deceased in Belgian soil that had never been trodden by an invader's foot.

Sentiment, respect for the last wishes of the dead and a reluctance to irritate into active opposition the patriotism of the relatives made the Germans chary of refusing these petitions, and a code of regulations was accordingly drawn up for the benefit of mourners desirous of accompanying the deceased on his last

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journey. Before passing the frontier the coffin was inspected by a German doctor, while all members of the funeral procession were obliged to deposit a large sum of money as a guarantee that they would return when the last rites were over. As these funerals grew more and more frequent, the little cemetery of Baar-le-Nassau had to be enlarged.

But in the last year of the war the German counter-espionage department began to smell a rat. Despite the vigilance of the frontier guards information was leaking out of Belgium in a most undesirable fashion, and their researches indicated Baar-le-Nassau as the centre where it was collected.

Hitherto the German physicians had contented themselves with a perfunctory inspection of the coffins destined for the little village, as they were loath to offend the sentiments of the mourners by any obstructive search. But it was obvious that something drastic would have to be done, as this state of affairs could not be permitted to continue. One evening, therefore, when a German doctor was watching the transfer of a deceased citizen of Antwerp from his deathbed to the coffin that was to bear him to his last resting-place, a squad of German police suddenly invaded the house and turned the sorrowing relatives unceremoniously out of the death-chamber. Then they began to examine the coffin, which they took to pieces in the vain hope of finding a false bottom where secret documents might be concealed.

As their researches proved fruitless, they laid hands on the corpse and bade the doctor search it thoroughly. He did so and discovered that a slender wooden tube had been rammed down its throat, in which were packed a number of reports giving information on the situation in Antwerp. As a result several Belgian spies, who were hopelessly compromised, were arrested

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and courtmartialled, while henceforth no more corpses were allowed to be buried in Baar-le-Nassau.

Although the Belgian nation as a whole evinced unswerving devotion to the Entente cause, some individual members of it were found willing to work for the Germans. Most of them were employed by the German Counter-espionage Department in the occupied territory, but others rendered service behind the Allied trenches in the little corner of their country that still held out against the invader. In this sector of the front there was an old country mansion, hardly a dozen miles from the firing-line, in which some officers of the British General Staff were billeted.

But the original inmates still stayed on, despite the protests of their guests, who declared that its close proximity to the front rendered the house too dangerous an abode for civilians. They were an aged aristocratic couple, who could trace their respective pedigrees back for many generations, and their armorial bearings were among the eldest in Belgium. Their two sons were officers in the Belgian army that still fought on the last few square miles of its native soil.

But from somewhere in this district information was reaching the Germans, and all indications pointed to the mansion as its source. It was certainly curious that no attempt was made to bomb it, although the enemy must have known that it was used by staff officers as a headquarter. Two members of the Intelligence Service were accordingly sent to make an investigation, the one posing as a general and the other disguised as his batman.

For several weeks they pursued their researches. Unobtrusively they ransacked the house from cellar to garret, but no compromising documents or appliances could be found. Several traps were laid, but yielded

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no results. The movements of the servants in attendance on the noble owners and their guests were closely surveyed, but nothing suspicious was found against any of them. But the information still continued to reach the enemy.

The agents came to the conclusion that the spies could only be the noble owners themselves, but proofs were lacking. They, therefore, departed for a conference with the heads of the Belgian Intelligence Service, who were positive that nothing detrimental was known against the aged couple. To accuse them in the absence of any evidence would have caused an undesirable scandal, but obviously something had to be done to close the leakage. The only way out of the dilemma, they decided, was to remove them to some more secluded locality where they would find no material for their powers of observation.

The staff officers were instructed to represent to their hosts that the mansion was far too unsafe a residence for them, but when they broached the subject, their hints were met with a definite and firm refusal. Never, vowed the aged couple, would they allow the dastardly invaders to drive them out of this last corner of their native land. Thus far they had retreated, but no farther.

Their home had escaped destruction by the German artillery, which was undoubtedly a miracle—a clear manifestation of Heaven that they were intended to stay. If this theory was wrong and a shell descended on it, then they were ready to die amid the ruins.

They were deaf to all persuasion, and circumstances forbade the use of force. There remained only the last resort—trickery.

One night when the household were at rest a picked working-party stole in the grounds and dug many holes, in which mines were judiciously bestowed. The

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trails were laid ; the workers covered up all traces of their operations and retired unseen. The next day just as the owners were sitting down to their lunch, a terrific explosion shook the walls of the house. It was followed by another, and yet another.

For several hours the din continued. The inmates of the mansion fled in terror to its cellars, where the dread sounds of the bombardment still continued to reach them. The pessimistic comments of the staff officers who shared their refuge heightened the realism of the situation.

At last, when the shades of night were falling, the pandemonium ceased, and the two terrified Belgians crept forth from the corner where they cowered. With tottering steps they made for their bedroom and hastily packed their most precious belongings into a couple of handbags. Then, with ashen faces, they sought out their English guests and expressed contrition for having rejected their advice. Their home, they now realised, was no longer habitable, and they would be only too glad to leave it at the earliest possible moment.

Their gratitude was pathetic when they were informed that a car waited to take them to safer quarters as soon as they were ready, and they lost no time in availing themselves of it. The same evening they reached Cassel, where their tale of woe elicited much sympathy from all listeners. But henceforward the Germans received no further information from the mansion, which in revenge they subjected to the punishment of a real bombardment.

All who have known the hardships of trench life on the western front will remember the size and aggressiveness of the rats, which seemed to revel in the special conditions created by the war. These rodents constituted a plague in every sense of the

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word, but on the eastern front the men in the trenches had to face another pest which proved even more troublesome than the rat, for the regions of Poland and Galicia, where the Austrians faced the Russians, were infested by large packs of wolves.

The wolf has always been plentiful in the vast forests that cover the land, and as the front was not so stabilised as in the west, wide tracts of woodland often separated the opposing trenches. In them the wolf-packs lived and thrived, for in the summer when warlike operations were frequent, the fresh corpses provided them with a liberal scale of diet.

In winter when the frozen soil was covered with snow, fighting was reduced to a minimum, so that the wolves were deprived of their ghastly fare. Emboldened by hunger, the famished animals made foraging expeditions to the trenches, where they did not hesitate to attack the soldiers manning them, and in certain sectors they caused so many casualties that the human enemies decided to take common measures to deal with them. On such occasions a temporary truce was proclaimed; the soldiers on both sides were organised into troops of beaters under their N.C.O.'s, while the officers composed the shooting party, which thoroughly enjoyed its day's sport. When the battue was over, roaring fires were lit in some forest clearing, around which the sportsmen fraternised in festive suppers. They fared sumptuously on the game with which the forests abounded; bottles were cracked, and the sounds of their mirth echoed through the woodland till the still hours of the morning.

But as good cheer and liquor loosen men's tongues, the Intelligences of both sides thought the opportunity too good to be neglected. Valuable information could be gleaned from a tipsy foeman whose caution

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was banished by the flowing bowl, and special officers, renowned for their steady heads, were deputed to ply the enemy freely with drink, while unobtrusively restricting their own potations.

The idea was good, but neither side seems to have profited by it. In several instances the sportsmen on both sides resented this intrusion of business in to the pleasures of their holiday and entered into a conspiracy to defeat the aims of Intelligence. The result was that at a fairly early stage of the proceedings the Intelligence officers on both sides were carried away in a helpless state of intoxication, while their intended victims celebrated their premature downfall in strong, triumphant potations. On such occasions Intelligence was fairly hoist with its own petard.

In 1916 the war-weariness, which was the forerunner of the Russian Revolution, had begun to manifest itself in the ranks of the Tsar's armies, so that desertions became numerous. The German General Staff decided to increase their number by a propaganda campaign, and issued instructions to their spies to put before would-be deserters the benefits of a life of ease in a prisoners' camp as compared with the hardships of the front. To stimulate this recruiting from the enemy's ranks, Intelligence agents were offered a cash bonus for every deserter they could bring into the German lines. If the Russian brought his arms and equipment with him, the premium was doubled.

At that time the German Intelligence Service employed a number of Jewish agents on the Russian front, who were delighted at the prospect of the rich harvest to be reaped from such operations. Many made large sums, but one at least proved the much maligned honesty of the Jew.

He had brought in a large party of deserters, and the

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German officer who took them over from him was about to make out an order for the sum due.

"No, thank you, sir," said the Jew, indicating the prisoners with an airy gesture, "these gentlemen have already paid me in advance for their trip, so you don't owe me anything."

In times of war it is generally advisable to follow the Scriptural proverb which enjoins that the left hand shall be kept in ignorance of the actions of the right, but there are occasions when even an Intelligence Service may observe this maxim too strictly. In the winter of 1914—15 the powers responsible for the operations of British Naval Intelligence decided to spread the rumour, for their own good reasons, that their fleet contemplated a descent on the north-western coasts of Germany. The agents in neutral and enemy territory were instructed to disseminate the false news, while at Portsmouth, Dover and other naval bases various warships carried out certain manœuvres which would lead enemy spies to believe that transports were being assembled to carry an invading army across the North Sea.

In due course these rumours reached Berlin, where they found belief. The coastal fortifications were strengthened, heavy guns were dismounted from warships and grouped into naval batteries at suitable spots, while a long line of trenches, extending from Cuxhaven to Borkum, was hastily dug. Naval Intelligence chuckled when its agents reported trains of German troops being hurried to the defence of the shores when their presence was urgently required in Flanders.

But unfortunately the naval authorities forgot to enlighten the sister service as to the purport of these manœuvres. The Military Intelligence Department had its own separate agents in Germany, who saw the

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assembly of considerable forces on the German coasts and reported their movements to the War Office, who drew the conclusion that a German scheme to invade England had been revealed in the nick of time.

Promptly considerable forces were rushed off to the east coast, where trenches were dug with feverish haste at localities that the Germans might deem suitable for landing. Thus the British Expeditionary Force in Flanders was likewise deprived of reinforcements that might have been turned to good account, while large sums of the taxpayers' money were spent on preparations to repel an invasion that was never contemplated. This time it was the turn for a German laugh at British expense.

The third laugh came when the heads of our Naval and Military Intelligence discovered that they had been playing at cross purposes, whereupon they made arrangements to pool all future information, and never forget to inform one another of their plans.

That much abused body of indefatigable workers, the Censor's staff, rendered noble service in the four years of their activities. Even in the first few weeks of the war they passed on much valuable information to the naval and military authorities, while the promptitude with which they took advantage of any slip made by a spy whose correspondence they examined was the undoing of several German agents in England. Their staff of scientists found chemical preparations that revealed all invisible inks, while the keen brains of 'Room 40' unravelled many a code that its inventor had deemed insoluble. Yet there was one occasion when they were completely and ignominiously baffled.

One of Switzerland's refugees at that period was James Joyce, the Irish writer, whose 'Ulysses' has been hailed as the century's masterpiece by literary critics

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of many countries. At the beginning of the war Joyce earned his living as a teacher of English in Trieste, where the Austrian authorities allowed him to remain until the spring of 1915. When Italy came into the war, all Entente subjects were expelled from the town and many interned, but Joyce obtained permission to leave Austria on parole and reside in Switzerland for the duration of hostilities.

With him he took the incomplete manuscript of *Ulysses*, which he finished in the autumn of 1917. He arranged for it to appear as a serial in an English and an American magazine, and the typescript was sent off chapter by chapter as the author revised it. The first instalments came duly to hand and were printed.

But after a long delay the two journals wrote to complain that nothing further had reached them. Eventually the missing packages turned up and were printed, but only after a lapse of many weeks, which caused great annoyance to the subscribers.

After the war the reasons for the delay leaked out. Although proclaimed a masterpiece by disciples of the modern literary movement, '*Ulysses*' is caviar to the general. The products of Joyce's amazing brain require the closest attention, and many passages of this wonderful book need the intense study before even the discerning readers can fathom their depths.

The style of '*Ulysses*' was so baffling to the Censor's staff that they took it for a coded report cleverly disguised as instalments of a novel. So instead of going to the printers, the opening chapters of the novel were sent to 'Room 40,' where the decoders and decipherers puzzled their wits over them. But in the end they had to admit themselves beaten, and suggested that the manuscript might after all turn out to be what it purported—a modern novel. A literary expert was therefore summoned to the Censor's

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office, and after due perusal he declared that it 'bore some faint resemblance to literature.' So 'Ulysses' was set free.

In a previous chapter it has been suggested that war conditions may have given the professional forger scope for honourable employment. It is, therefore, not surprising to learn that on at least one occasion a professional burglar was invited to exercise his talents in the service of his country.

In 1917 it was ascertained that the Austrian Consulate in Zürich was used as a letterbox for reports of Austrian Intelligence agents working in Italy. The Italian counterspies found themselves unable to trace out these agents, who were causing a lot of damage, and as only desperate remedies could put an end to their activities, it was decided as a last resource to burgle the Austrian Consulate.

The Italian Intelligence agents in Switzerland took council with their British colleagues, and between them they hatched out a neat plan. Their observations led them to conclude that the affair would stand more chances of success between 6 and 9 in the evening than in the small hours of the morning, when the Swiss police kept a vigilant eye upon all consulates in the town.

The conspirators learnt that the consul sometimes remained behind after his staff had left, to transact business of a confidential nature. The first measure, therefore, was to ensure his absence for one particular evening, and this they accomplished by means of a faked invitation to dine with the military attaché of the Austrian Legation in Berne. The British amateur printers who had so successfully forged the *Frankfurter Zeitung* found no difficulty in supplying note-paper resembling that of the Austrian Legation, and a gentleman with a facile pen imitated the signature

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of the attaché, Captain Klein. Needless to say, arrangements were made to intercept the Consul's letter of acceptance before it could reach the gallant captain.

Provided therefore that nothing untoward occurred, the conspirators knew that the only person on the premises at the hour chosen for their raid would be the Consulate's porter, who was supposed to remain on duty until relieved by a night-watchman. But a study of his habits revealed a particular fondness for the bottle and a habit of taking liquid refreshment as soon as the Consul quitted the premises. He was, therefore, assigned to the special attention of a British agent, who undertook to doctor his liquor in a fashion that would render him incapable of any further interest in the proceedings.

The British-Italian forces could therefore reckon on the run of the premises for about two hours before the night-watchman came on duty. This person, they ascertained, was a steady man, with a stern sense of duty, who was likely to prove an ugly customer if he arrived upon the scene before they left. As far as he was concerned, physical violence was out of the question, so that they had to make sure of finishing the job before he turned up. They wondered how far their burgling talents would avail them when it came to tackling the safe in which the Consul would be certain to bestow his confidential documents before leaving to keep his appointment with the attaché at the Hotel Baur au Lac.

Then an Italian agent remembered having read an account of a trial in Florence, where two burglars, who had been caught red-handed breaking into the strong-room of a bank, were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. He was particularly impressed by the scientific way they had set about their job.

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He went to Bern and made a suggestion to the Italian Legation, which was duly submitted to the Minister of the Interior. There followed an exchange of correspondence, as an upshot of which Pini, the agent in question, went to Italy, whence he returned in a few days with the two burglars, who were promised a free pardon and a large sum of money for the service they were to render their country.

The evening of the appointed day arrived; the Austrian Consul went off to keep his appointment at the Hotel Baur au Lac, but while awaiting his host he was summoned to the telephone. A voice, which he thought he recognised as belonging to a secretary of the Legation at Bern, told him that his host had been detained at the last moment, but was on his way to Zürich by a later train. Would the *Herr Konsul* therefore mind dining alone, as Captain Klein could not reach him till some time after the dinner hour. As Captain Klein, a much over-worked man, had been delayed in similar fashion on previous occasions, the Consul was not suspicious. But when he had eaten his dinner and there was still no sign of the Captain, he gave him up and decided to return to the Consulate, where he still had arrears of work to finish.

He was too late. In the outer office he stumbled over the senseless body of his porter; in his private room he saw the open door of his safe, from which all its precious documents had vanished.

The Italians found papers that enabled them to lay hands on the Austrian agents who had blown up the cruiser *Leonardo da Vinci*, as well as discovering the names and addresses of eighteen Italians in enemy pay, who were subsequently tried and executed. The safe also contained a large sum of money, which constituted the consul's treasury for payments to be made to the secret agents; this cash the burglars were

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allowed to keep as a bonus for their efficiency. The Swiss police offered a large reward for information that might lead to arrest of the thieves, but, needless to say, no one ever came to claim it.

Perhaps the most amusing incident in connection with espionage during the recent war was the discovery of an information bureau in a Dutch town, run by a syndicate of international spies, where secret information from every belligerent country was sold to the highest bidder. What guarantees of its genuineness were offered, history does not relate, and it is to be feared that many purchasers were sadly disappointed when they came to test the quality of the goods.

The nations owning the best Intelligence Services are always chary of information offered them by the free-lance, for sad experience has taught them that they can only obtain reliable data by sending their own trusted agents to get it. Such men and women are invariably their own nationals.

CHAPTER IX

A NATION OF AMATEUR SPIES

The Intelligence agents of most nations are carefully chosen, well-paid men and women, with special qualifications, such as the talent for speaking several languages without an accent and the power to assume different personalities at will. A good spy must also possess sufficient technical knowledge to enable him to discern the value of the information he acquires.

Although the real expert in spying is born and not made, his efficiency can be developed by training, especially in time of war when he must gain his experience under the most difficult conditions. Consequently most belligerents established spy-schools during the recent war, which gave suitable instruction to promising recruits. The Russians, whose life under the *regime* of a political police made them familiar with the fine arts of spying in peace time, were not slow to adapt their methods to war conditions, and their spy-schools gave a thorough training. By maps and sketches the pupil learnt to appreciate the strategic positions of the German trenches and the topographical features of the localities where they were situated. He learnt to draw maps from memory and distinguish the appearance of various pieces of artillery so that he could guess the calibre at a glance. He was shown the different types of German uniform and learnt the badges of rank worn by German officers.

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Then followed a course of instruction relative to his behaviour in the enemy's country. For his sojourn there he was naturally provided with false papers, proving him to be either a German or a neutral. If his mission took him to Russian territory in German occupation, he posed as a native of the locality he visited, and was endowed with a set of fictitious relations, whose names, addresses and occupations he had to learn by heart. For reports that he sent back to Russia via a neutral land he was taught a special code which permitted him to give his information under the cover of news about family and business affairs. The addresses of the *letterboxes* in neutral countries were constantly changed so as to avert the enemy's suspicion.

As previously remarked, the master spy is born and not made, and though such training will help him to success, it will not turn an inferior craftsman into a master. At the most it will enable him to escape detection for a few weeks, during which time he may be lucky enough to collect some information of value to his employers. Sooner or later he is trapped, and the Russians admitted that barely 50 per cent of the pupils trained in their spy-schools survived even the first mission behind the enemy lines. The greater number of failures faced the usual firing-party, though some saved their lives by entering German service as double spies.

The reader may, therefore, wonder how it profited the Russians to devote so much time and energy to the education of spies of whom roughly half proved a dead loss to their trainers. The answer is that Russia's resources were so enormous that she could afford the loss, provided that the system produced some few efficient spies after the failures were weeded out by the enemy. The efforts made by the Germans to

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discover the localities of these training-schools are the best justification of their utility.

Yet great as were the achievements of the professional spies in the recent war, they must yield first place to the amateur spies of the gallant Belgian nation, who fearlessly risked their lives day after day with no other reward than the honour of serving their country and harassing the enemy in occupation of their homes. It may be doubted whether history affords any parallel to their amazing feats.

After the German drive through Belgium had given the invader possession of all but a tiny portion of the land, practically the entire population settled down to make themselves as useful to their allies as possible. Theirs was a threefold task :

(1) To pilot across the Dutch frontier all men of military age willing and able to join the Entente armies.

(2) To forward to Entente headquarters information about the enemy's military movements in their country.

(3) To disseminate among the Belgian population news that the German Censorship deemed prudent to withhold from them.

The accomplishment of these objectives involved constant crossing and recrossing of the boundary line between Belgium and Holland. In the first few months this was not so difficult ; many messages were delivered by shooting them across the frontier with bows and arrows. Daring couriers swum the icy waters of the canals and dykes in the depth of winter ; others floated across on rafts. Many sank to their death, disabled by some German bullet, but their fate did not deter others from taking their places.

But as soon as the Germans had the country sufficiently settled to devote time to the spy problem,

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they took measures to check these activities which were so harmful to their cause. The whole length of the Dutch-Belgian frontier was closed by a barbed wire entanglement, which was later electrified by a current dealing instantaneous death to the hand that touched it. At intervals frontier guards patrolled with loaded rifles, while in every village near the frontier notices were affixed, advising the inhabitants that anyone found without a hundred yards of the barrier would be fired on without further warning. Yet despite these obstacles messengers passed almost daily between Belgium and Holland.

The experiences of a Belgian who escaped across the frontier to join the army and survived to tell his tale are worth narration as typical of the efforts made by several thousands of his countrymen who helped to swell the Allied forces. In Brussels he was told to be at a certain Inn at Bouchoute, near Bruges, where the landlord would put him and others in touch with a guide. When he reached the spot, he saw German soldiers in the dining-room of the inn, but, mindful of his instructions, went round to the back entrance on the evening of the appointed day and was shown into the kitchen.

The landlord came and told him that the crossing would be harder than the people in Brussels imagined. Only a few days previously the Germans had made a round of all houses in the locality that abutted on to the frontier line and blocked up doors and windows looking into Holland. The death penalty awaited the owners if they removed the boards affixed by the German police, and at present they were too cowed to risk disobedience. The party must, therefore, take a roundabout way across open country.

At intervals various strangers were shown into the kitchen by the landlord, but none of them spoke to

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each other. They sat in silence till nearly twelve o'clock, by which time a party of about fifteen had assembled. At last the guide arrived and after counting them announced that he required twenty francs from every person before they set out. One poorly-clad man protested, but the landlord explained that the guide was a smuggler who had undertaken the task of escorting them to the frontier because the regular man was suspected by the Germans and deemed it prudent to lie low for a while. The smuggler naturally wanted payment for his risks, and might have to use some of the money as a bribe on their behalf if circumstances dictated.

Their guide then explained that they were to cross at a spot about two kilometres distant from the village. They must follow him in single file, each a few yards behind his neighbour, and no one must utter a sound whatever happened. On their silence their lives depended, so that if anyone could not trust his tongue in an emergency, it would be better for him to drop out of the party now rather than risk the common safety.

They bore inland and did not turn again towards the frontier until they had put some distance between them and the village. At last the guide halted in a spinney. "Over there" he announced, "you can see the lights of Philippine, the first village on Dutch soil, and we are now only a few minutes from the frontier. There is a German sentry about eighty metres to our right and another a hundred metres on our left. The nearest light you can see comes from the house of the mayor of Philippine, who is a Belgian ; as soon as you are across, he will look after you. Now we must wait until the clouds cover the moon ; then you run as fast as you can. There's a spot between a lone tree and a clump of bushes where you can crawl under the wire."

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For twenty minutes or so they waited. Clouds were racing across the sky, but by some perverse chance none came to cover the face of the moon. At last, just as they were ready to shriek aloud with the suspense, the long-desired veil of clouds brought darkness.

"Now then!" commanded the guide, and all began to run.

They were in luck, for no sentinel's challenge broke the stillness of the night. At last the guide halted, and when the party assembled around him, they saw the wire entanglement stretching away to right and left. But the guide led them to a dip in the ground, where there was just room to crawl beneath the lowest strands, and eased their passage by pulling them with a rubber tyre that protected him from the current.

Another similar experience describes a passage across the frontier, again from Bouchoute, in which Gabriële Petit, one of the most famous Belgian spies, took part. On this occasion she was carrying despatches to Folkestone.

She arrived at the same inn, but was told that it was no longer used as a meeting-place, as the Germans suspected the landlord and watched him closely. Several German agents were on the premises, but one of them, a Belgian prostitute, was drunk, and the landlord profited by the disturbance she created to slip out and escort Gabriële Petit to the new rendezvous, where the guide awaited her with his party of fugitives.

The German vigilance was now so strict that the old way to the frontier had been abandoned. The final stage led through a wide stretch of marshland that was so difficult to traverse that the guide was at first unwilling to encumber himself with a female passenger, whose powers of endurance he mistrusted. But Gabriële Petit insisted and gained

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her way, although the man warned her that he could accept no responsibility for the consequences.

As usual the party proceeded in single file, and strict silence was enjoined. When they were a fair distance from Bouchoute, the guide halted them and announced that the German password for the sentries was 'Königsberg'; if they were challenged, the man to whose tongue it came easiest must speak and no one else.

Unlike the smuggler of the previous episode, this guide took no money from his passengers, for he regarded his work as a patriotic duty. He led them a zig-zag way through the darkness, so that often they seemed to be going back on their tracks, and, to add to their difficulties, a mist had risen so that they could scarcely see a yard in front of them. But the guide picked his way unerringly, and at last they reached the edge of the swamp.

Here they halted again and listened to a grim warning from their guide that they must take no notice of any shots they might hear. "Better one should fall and drown," he avowed, "than all be taken and executed." He then told them that the wire entanglement ran across the marsh, and to pass it they would be forced to wade along a ditch about three feet deep. If they went forward in a straight line, they could not miss this ditch. Then, after passing the barrier, they would still have another three hundred metres or so to cross before they reached Dutch soil, and this last stage was probably patrolled by sentinels.

After repeating his instructions, the guide turned back. It was impossible, he explained, for him to cross back into Belgium alone, especially if the German sentries had been alarmed.

Linking hands, they formed a chain to help one another and make certain of keeping together. They

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soon realised that the guide had not exaggerated their difficulties, for with every step they sank up to the knees. Despite the icy coldness of the night, sweat poured down their faces, and their breath came in sobs and gasps.

But after a seeming eternity they reached the ditch, where they had to wade through water that sometimes came up to their chins. In this fashion they passed under the wire entanglement and, one by one, crawled on to 'dry' land again to commence the last phase of their arduous journey.

Suddenly they heard a voice singing in German, but the thickness of the mist made it impossible for them to locate the sentry's position. Then a shot rang out, and, mindful of the guide's instructions, all broke into a run. But their pace was no quicker than that of a walker on a good road, for their feet sank at every step. Helping one another as best they could, they plodded on, and, to their surprise, no further shots followed.

The German sentinel had fired at random, for his instructions were to give no suspicious sound the benefit of the doubt. But the mist had confused him, or perhaps he did not fancy a pursuit across the swamp, for the frontier guards were mainly *Landsturmmänner*, veterans of 40 or over, who cherished their ease and comfort. At all events he decided to trouble himself no further, and after they had plodded on a while, a light loomed through the mist. They had reached the first Dutch house, the cottage of a widowed peasant-woman, and on the stone floor of her living-room the whole party lay down to sleep the sleep of exhaustion.

The path through the swamp was soon found to be too dangerous, for when Gabriële Petit returned from England, another way had been selected. A Dutch

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sympathiser owned a country-house quite close to the frontier, and a few yards beyond his garden fence he had pointed out a spot where the spies could dig a deep hole under the wire entanglement. In the daytime this subway was concealed by a roofing of planks covered with earth, and so craftily was the work done that even the most expert eye would have been deceived. The precise locality was a secret kept from all save the regular guides who helped spies and fugitives across the frontier.

The ingenuity of the Belgians knew no bounds. Sometimes it was found possible to push strands of the wire aside with hands clad in rubber gloves ; sometimes bicycle tyres were employed to pull the wire, and thus make an opening large enough for a human body to crawl through. Later on they crossed the deadly wire by means of elaborate folding-ladders, coated with rubber, which were concealed in some spinney or bush when not in use.

The Belgian spies did not achieve their successes with impunity. Many were caught and suffered the usual penalty, too often, it is to be feared, through the treachery of fellow-countrymen who had been induced to work for the Germans. And frequently the rising sun revealed to the frontier guards the grim spectacle of a charred body entangled in the fence, sometimes with detached arms or legs. An unlucky spy, endeavouring to cross the barrier unaided, had paid the penalty for carelessness or insufficient knowledge of the laws that govern electric currents.

But there were other spies whose cunning was so great and whose operations proved so successful that the German police placed prices on their heads. In such cases proclamations were posted up in all the frontier villages, warning the inhabitants that anyone sheltering or assisting the spy was liable to the death

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penalty. Often a money fine was imposed on the village or town to whom the spy belonged.

But no threats were potent enough to deter the Belgian peasantry from assisting the spies that crossed the frontier regularly. On the Dutch side there was no lack of sympathisers who rendered valuable service by concealing them from the German counter-espionage agents with whom Holland swarmed.

The following incident will show the perils and hardships which a spy was forced to endure on his journeys between Belgium and Holland. Hair-raising as they may seem to the casual reader, he regarded them as part and parcel of his day's work, though he was no professional spy, inured by years of pre-war work in the employment of some Intelligence, but merely an ordinary peasant who risked his life as a patriotic duty and looked forward to the time when he might once more plough his fields and milk his cows.

We find him well equipped to counter the deadly electric current that circulates through the wire fence. The suit of clothes he wears is made of rubber, though the unobservant eye would see no difference between it and the dull grey cloth that garbs so many of his countrymen. He has a rubber cap and rubber gloves, while in the bundle he carries is a pair of rubber 'waders,' reaching to his thighs.

He had been allowed a few days rest in Flushing, but now he must return to deliver important despatches in Brussels. It is the time of the full moon in a cloudless midsummer, and he knows that the bright nights will render his passage doubly difficult. He may have to wait several days before he finds a suitable opportunity.

In a Dutch village close to the wire lives a farmer who has befriended him on more than one occasion, and whose help is likely to prove valuable this time.

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He makes for the house of this ally, who lends him a pair of wide trousers, a silver-embossed belt, a close-fitting cap and a pair of wooden clogs. Thus attired he is indistinguishable from any Dutch peasant of the district, so that he will attract no attention from the German counterspies who have been warned from Flushing to keep a sharp look-out for him.

To maintain the illusion, he works in his friend's fields, where his assistance is welcome, for the hay harvest must be gathered as speedily as possible, and as every farmer in Holland is in the same haste, labour is at a premium. Three days he toils as unsparingly as any hired man in the midsummer heat, but his fellow-workers are unaware of his real mission, for his Flemish speech is indistinguishable from their Dutch patois, and so to them he is a distant kinsman of the boss who has come down from Flushing for a few days to help him over the rush period.

But the spy has not failed to note the growing sultriness of the air which presages to the weather-wise workers in the fields the approach of a heavy thunderstorm. At present the sky is an unbroken blue, but at any moment the black clouds may creep up, apparently from nowhere, and give him the chance for which he waits.

His chance came on the evening of the third day, just when he was retiring to bed after a heavy day in the hayfields. From his attic window he heard the distant roll of thunder; he looked out and saw the moon engulfed in a sea of clouds. Hastily he donned his rubber suit.

A knock at his door. His farmer friend had also noted the change in the weather. The two men tip-toed down the stairs.

"I'll come as far as the wire with you," volunteered the farmer.

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"Then I can wait till you're safely across and send back word to Flushing." But the spy declined the proffered assistance, assuring his host that his chances were better if he went alone. He knew that there were many German spies on this side of the frontier, but one man might escape their vigilance, whereas two were certain to attract attention.

"But I won't start till the rain comes," he decided, and the two men sat down in the deserted kitchen, where for a while they puffed at their pipes in stolid silence.

From time to time one or other rose and opened the back door.

Massive banks of low clouds now obscured the few remaining stars, and the spy noted with satisfaction that the full fury of the tempest was likely to be lavished on the Belgian side of the frontier.

A jagged streak of blue lightning lit the darkened kitchen, and a deafening crash followed. Then the first drops from the clouds above rattled sharply on the windowpanes. The two men rose. "Good luck" said the farmer at the door. They clasped hands; then the spy slipped out and vanished into the darkness with a couple of steps.

The frontier was barely ten minutes walk from the farm buildings, but it was well for the spy that he knew every inch of the way, for the night was so dark that he scarcely saw an inch before him. With bent head he plodded on, heedless of the pelting drops stinging his face. Every now and then he halted, his suspicious ears fancying that above the din of the storm they had caught the ominous tread of human footsteps. But each time it proved a false alarm.

At last he reached a deep ditch that he knew to be only fifty yards distance from the frontier, to which it ran parallel. A long line of willows flanked it, and

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under the shelter of one of them he allowed himself a few moments rest. He examined his revolver and unfastened the safety catch. Then a last look round to make sure that no Dutch frontier guard, patrolling the line of the barrier in quest of smugglers, was in the neighbourhood, and he started off again.

But suddenly, warned by some sixth sense, he threw himself flat on the ground behind a bush. The next moment the long ray of a searchlight shot across from the Belgian side and began to sweep the ground around him in a methodic circle.

Such a wary old hand as our spy had encountered searchlights before and knew to a hundredth of a second how long a period of darkness he had between each of their circuits. As soon as the beam passed him, he sprang forward and made a dash for a bush ahead that its ray had revealed. Thus progressing by short spurts and using every scrap of cover as effectively as any Indian scout, he contrived to reach a broad road, when he knew that he was now only a few yards from the deadly wires. Along its length ran another row of willows and behind the thick stem of one of them he crouched.

He watched the passage of the searchlight across the wires, from which glistening raindrops fell, and utilised the rays to take note of the various places likely to afford him his opportunity. For a while he wavered between two suitable spots, but at last he came to a decision and began to crawl forward on hands and knees.

On the Dutch side of the frontier there was an ordinary fence to protect the unwary traveller from the electrified wire. This the spy crossed and then became aware, with some dismay, that the entanglement had been thickened with additional cross-strands since he last left Belgium, about ten days previously.

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His one consolation was that, so far as he could see, no German patrol lurked in his immediate neighbourhood. He pulled his cap down over his ears and extracted his wire-cutters from his pocket. Snip! Snip! In a couple of seconds the clippers had shorn through sufficient strands to admit the passage of his body. Deftly bending back the severed ends with practised hands protected by the rubber gloves, he thrust his head through.

An instant later he was on Belgian soil, but before he advanced more than a couple of paces his foot stumbled on a concealed wire, which caused the shrill tones of an alarm bell to give their warning. The spy started to run as fast as his feet could carry him over the sodden ground.

Luckily the din of the storm drowned the first notes of alarm. Out of the darkness came a German sentinel, but he was past him before the man was properly aware of his presence. The German turned and fired.

All around him the spy heard shots, and now the searchlight was directed so as to illumine the ground he had to cover on his way to the unelectrified barbed-wire fence that defined the limits of the forbidden frontier zone. This second barrier was a hundred metres distant from the first, but before he was half way to it, the beam of the searchlight caught him. More shots rang out.

But wind and rain make for uncertain marksmanship, so that he reached the barbed wire unscathed. In a couple of seconds he had negotiated this fence and was heading for a thicket that the rays of the searchlight revealed to him.

There he rested to draw breath and make certain that he was unwounded. A quick examination certified that no bullet had touched him, although he was

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bleeding in half a dozen places from scratches inflicted by the barbed wire. His rubber suit was too badly torn to ever again serve his purpose, and he had lost his wire-cutters.

No matter! His equipment could be replaced in Brussels, but he must be gone with all speed. Although the Germans were unlikely to venture into the thicket after him that night, they had probably marked his hiding-place and would draw a cordon round it so as to catch him at their leisure when day broke. His only hope was to gain the village of Steeken, where trusty friends would conceal him until the hue and cry had abated.

He emerged cautiously and made his way across country to Steeken, where the ally whose assistance he proposed to claim was an old smuggler who for many years before the war had earned innumerable dishonest pennies by conveying commodities from cheaper Belgium into Holland, often under the very noses of the Dutch guards. In a hayloft over the smuggler's stable he had stored a German uniform which had served him well on previous occasions, but he knew that his friend had a German soldier billeted on him, out of whose way he must contrive to keep for the present. When he reached the house, he therefore crept into the loft, where he was able to snatch a couple of hours' sleep.

In due course this soldier arose, breakfasted and went off to his usual duties. As soon as the coast was clear the spy presented himself to his friend, who kept guard while he changed into his uniform and enjoyed a meal.

But he had barely finished his coffee when the smuggler came in to give the alarm. A police patrol had entered the village and was making a house-to-house search. The spy knew that he was lost unless

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his fertile brain could speedily conjure up some device to outwit his pursuers.

In a flash the inspiration came to him. Stripping off his coat and shirt, he hastened to the yard. "A wash-tub and some hot water," he commanded the smuggler's wife.

Ten minutes later three or four frontier police approached the house. "There's no one inside except my wife," the smuggler told them.

They did not accept his word, for their man had been mixed up in too many dubious transactions to inspire confidence. But this time he appeared to have spoken the truth; they searched his house from attic to cellar, but found no traces of the spy they were after.

When they left it to investigate the stable, they passed by the courtyard, where they saw a man stripped to the waist, whose trousers and cap proclaimed him to be a German soldier. He was washing a shirt, and as he dipped his arms in the soapy water, he gaily hummed the tune of one of those topical songs that every private in the German army was singing.

"Your billet?" enquired one of the police, and the smuggler nodded. Then they went on to the stables.

But though they searched the loft, they found no signs of the rubber garments that would have told a tale to their practiced eyes, for the latter were reposing at the bottom of the wash-tub. And if the German soldiers arms had not been covered with soap, they might have wondered why they were so badly scratched. These details, however, escaped their notice, and that same evening the spy was on his way to Brussels.

A fortnight later he was back in Flushing, where he delivered to his headquarters some interesting facts concerning the new submarine dock in Zeebrugge.

Intelligence agents often make use of carrier pigeons

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to transmit their reports, and the Belgian spies found this method of sending news extremely useful. Their pigeon post was organised in connection with the British Intelligence Service, which supplied the birds and received their despatches in English headquarters. The German frontier guards had instructions to fire on any pigeon they saw, and succeeded in bringing down a few, but as sentinels cannot keep their noses constantly pointed skyward, the odds were on the bird as soon as it started on its homeward journey.

But the carrier pigeon involves certain drawbacks, which restrict its use. The birds must be sent in cages to the resident spy who uses them, and it is by no means easy to smuggle a number of cages across a closely guarded frontier. Then they must be fed, and as one of the first measures adopted by authorities in wartime is to forbid the keeping of carrier pigeons by private individuals, anyone buying quantities of maize becomes an object of suspicion. Three or four grains of maize found in a suspect's pocket have been considered good enough proof to warrant his conviction as a spy. Moreover the birds, like others of their kind, have the habit of expressing their feelings by loud, distinctive coos, so that they are liable to betray their possessor at any moment unless they can be hidden somewhere safely out of earshot of any inquisitive counterspy. Consequently only the most reliable spies, whose behaviour is above suspicion by the enemy's agents, can afford to take charge of carrier pigeons. Such a man was a certain Edgar Steyart, of Lokeren, near Ghent, who succeeded in convincing the Germans that he was in sympathy with their cause.

Before the war he was a horsedealer, whose profession frequently took him on journeys outside his own country. He spoke fluent German, and possessed

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a keen sense of humour, with a frank, engaging personality and easy manners that effectively masked an iron will. When the Germans occupied Belgium, they commandeered most of the horses they found there, but Steyart persuaded the German commandant of his locality to leave his stable untouched on the condition that his animals were at the disposal of the authorities for special services.

But as his business was in abeyance, he took to smuggling as a livelihood, and for a long time the Germans winked at his trips across the frontier because he was liberal with presents of the cigars and spirits he bought advantageously in Holland. He, therefore, contrived to get in touch with the Belgian Intelligence Service and volunteered to work as a spy.

For a long time he conveyed carrier pigeons across the frontier along with his consignments of tobacco and spirits. But at last the Germans found that too much information was leaking out of the country, and a new set of frontier regulations came into force. Steyart received a hint that his smuggling expeditions must be restricted.

He decided to take to legitimate trade in such articles as the Dutch authorities permitted to leave their country, and his pleasing personality enabled him to extract from the Germans the widest liberties they could grant him. He was not allowed to put foot on Dutch soil, but could go as far as an opening in the wire barrier where a road ran from Belgium into Holland. Here the Dutch traders congregated, and wares and money passed from hand to hand under the eyes of the German guards. Steyart was compelled to take a German soldier with him on such trips. But in spite of these obstacles he contrived to smuggle out his despatches.

As his horses and conveyances were often

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requisitioned by the military, he was in uninterrupted contact with officers and N.C.O.s, from whom he unobtrusively extracted much information concerning the enemy's movements. Whenever German troops from the front were sent in to rest-billets in his locality, he was invariably ordered to Lokeren railway station, which was closed to civilian traffic, to fetch the billeting officer. His own inferences, based on casual conversation with this gentleman, enabled him to report accurately the composition of the division withdrawn from the front and the one replacing it, and he could also deduce the losses sustained by the relieved troops. All this information crossed the frontier when he went to make his purchases, along with which he often received carrier pigeons, for the old woman with whom he so frequently dealt, a wrinkled lady with a biting tongue, who loved to banter obscenities with the German frontier guards, was in reality a British agent. But Steyart must have had iron nerves, for if one of the drowsy pigeons had wakened sufficiently from its torpor to utter a single coo, he would have faced a firing party within the next twenty-four hours.

Steyart was ruthless in his dealings with his own compatriots when he considered it necessary to sacrifice individuals for the nation's good. He continually won favour from the Germans by laying information against Belgians for smuggling and other minor offences, and in this fashion made himself so useful to the authorities that he was invited to join the German counter-espionage service. He promptly accepted, and soon found an opportunity to win the good opinion of his superiors.

A German soldier was murdered in a frontier village, and suspicion fell on three Belgians. Two were arrested, but the third contrived to reach

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Antwerp, where he took refuge in the slums of the harbour quarter. The proceedings of the military court established the fact that the two prisoners were merely accomplices, while the fugitive was the actual slayer, but the sentence ran that the other two must pay the supreme penalty in his stead if he could not be found within a certain time.

Steyart was ordered to help in the search for the murderer and quickly made up his mind to catch him, as his arrest would save the lives of the other two and give him a prestige that he could utilise for his country's advantage. He knew that his task was difficult, for searching the harbour quarter of Antwerp was like looking for a needle in a haystack. But Steyart proved that he had the makings of a good detective, for in an incredibly short time he tracked the fugitive to the tenement where he lay hid and handed him over to the German police. This feat blackened him in the eyes of his countrymen, and several times his life was in danger from their vengeance, for only a few trusted intimates knew that his services to the Germans were simply a blind. Steyart merely smiled at Belgian threats, for he knew that he had now established a measure of confidence that would enable him to prosecute his operations with greater facility.

Once when the frontier guards shot down a carrier pigeon, he was summoned to help in the search for the spy who had despatched it. Knowing that the bird was one which he had released himself, he made an excuse to delay the search party for a couple of hours, which breathing-space he used to bestow the others in a place of greater security. They were concealed on the outskirts of a neighbouring wood, but he removed them to its depths, placing their cages in a dry ditch and masking the opening with a layer of

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branches. Then he went off to take part in the search.

He was painfully surprised to learn that the German counterspies had gained information which would eventually lead them to the wood where the birds were hidden, but assumed a cheerful countenance and took his place with the searchers. Unfortunately, one of the birds began to coo just when the party were in the neighbourhood of his hiding-place.

"There they are," shouted a German agent.

"Nonsense," replied Steyart with a smile. "Those are ordinary wood pigeons. This place is full of them, but you can easily tell them by their noise." Thereupon he gave a good imitation of the bird's coo.

"Now a carrier pigeon makes quite a different sound," he added, illustrating his assertion with another coo. "And besides, there are lots of wild ducks flying over that you might easily mistake for carrier pigeons unless you knew their cries." He then gave a third imitation, and by this time the German agents were so confused that they allowed him to lead them out of the wood and establish a false scent.

Steyart's reputation held good till the end of the war, by which time he was in such favour with the invaders that when they left Belgium they wanted to take him with them to save him from the vengeance of his compatriots. He would, indeed, have been lynched but for the intervention of the mayor of Lokeren who was in his confidence; this official hid him in his house for several days until the people were in a calmer frame of mind. Then he explained to them the significance of the services Steyart had rendered his country.

This trick of pretending to serve the enemy was employed by many Belgians, but on one occasion a very cunning ruse was devised to hoodwink the

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German counterspies. A circular was sent round to all the spies who made regular crossings of the frontier, warning them not to trust a certain Mlle. C. who posed as a patriot but was really in German pay. A second confidential document told them that this warning was to be carried openly on their persons; should any agent be caught, he must feign an attempt to destroy it, but take good care to let it fall into German hands.

The fact of the matter was that Mlle. C. was one of the best Belgian spies. As the daughter of an hotel-keeper in Ghent whose establishment was much frequented by German officers, she had ample opportunity to pick up choice titbits of information. She was a handsome girl who made the best use of her feminine charms and a sufficiently fanatical patriot to have no scruples about giving her body to any German whom she believed to be in the possession of vital information.

The Belgians knew that sooner or later one or other of their spies must fall into German hands. His fate would be inevitable, but before he died he would at least have the grim satisfaction of knowing that he had helped to make Mlle. C.'s position in the enemy's camp more secure. And this proved to be the case, for a Belgian spy was caught with the warning on him and paid the penalty with his life. Mlle. C. survived to be decorated for her services to her country.

Like Steyart, she was one of the lucky few, for most of the active Belgian spies were caught in the end. Sometimes a capture led to a whole host of arrests, while in one case thirty six spies were courtmartialled simultaneously. Their trial took place in Brussels, and all were postal or railway officials who co-operated in a particularly ingenious system that enabled them to send off daily reports to the Entente armies. So

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cleverly masked were their methods that their prosecutors could not have established a case against more than two or three of them, but for the fact that a young man whom they employed as a courier broke down under the strain and confessed. Nine death sentences were demanded and obtained, but only three were actually carried out, the others being commuted to long terms of penal servitude, which expired automatically at the end of the war.

At another courtmartial twenty-three railwaymen were tried for espionage. Their work brought them into contact with German troop trains, so that by noting regimental numbers and other details they were able to pool their information and collate reports that gave accurate descriptions of German military movements and told the Entente generals which sectors were being reinforced. This group was betrayed by Belgian treachery, and Colson, Roland and Deblock, the stationmasters of Ottignies, Schaerbeek and Ath, respectively, were condemned and shot. The others escaped with minor sentences. Another detection of espionage practised by officials brought a batch of twenty-six to trial. Seventeen death sentences were pronounced, four of which were carried out.

Belgian treachery was responsible for the unearthing of a nest of spies operating in the Malines district. Seventeen were tried, and the four leaders executed.

In all these cases the spies were charged with collecting information about German military movements, which were relayed to Entente headquarters by couriers who had their own methods of negotiating the electrified wire barrier. Four or five regular lines of communication were established, one of which actually commenced behind the German trenches in

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the Ypres sector. This last ended in Bouchoute, a village which sprawled across the Dutch frontier, and for several years the reports were taken across in milk cans with cunningly contrived false bottoms.

Belgian Intelligence offices were established at Sluys, Flushing and Terneuzen to deal with the mass of material that reached them.

For southern Belgium a line of communication was established between Liège and Maastricht by a Belgian artillery officer. He took part in the defence of Liège, and after the fall of the fortress volunteered to change into plain clothes and remain behind as an Intelligence agent. His technical knowledge enabled him to collect valuable data concerning the German heavy artillery, which he relayed to Maastricht by a service of couriers that he established from the townsfolk and peasantry.

He escaped notice for about a year, but was at last detected and courtmartialled. As an officer of the Belgian army, found in the enemy's camp in plain clothes, he was liable to execution, but he made no excuse for his actions. He had merely done his duty, he told the German officers who tried him, and so impressed were they by his dignified attitude that not one of them suggested the death penalty. He spent the remainder of the war in honourable captivity in a German fortress.

His capture temporarily paralysed the Liège—Maastricht line of communication, but three months later it was again in use. This was, however, only a repetition of what happened elsewhere, for often enough the German police arrested a whole batch of spies and thus affected the temporary closure of a line of communication with Holland. But as soon as the invader's vigilance was lulled, a fresh service was organised, and, undeterred by the fate of their pre-

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decessors, new couriers bore the reports to Sluys and Flushing.

Over 50,000 men of military age were smuggled across the frontier to take their places in the ranks of the Allied Armies. The value of the information conveyed by the spies can never be estimated, but it undoubtedly outweighed the sacrifices with which it was bought.

CHAPTER X

WOMEN SPIES

The female agent always is, was and will be the romantic figure *par excellence* in the profession of Intelligence. The legends that have grown up around the personalities of Mata Hari and 'Mlle. Docteur' are proof of this. But upon the practical utility of female agents the opinions of Intelligence Services are, were and always will be divided.

In the first place a female agent generally lacks the power of disguise that her male colleague possesses, although the masculine spies do not assume wigs and false beards with the facility imputed to them by some writers of fiction. A false beard, of the type worn by an actor on the stage, looks natural enough when aided by grease-paint and limelight, but if worn in the street in broad daylight it endows its wearer with such a fantastic appearance that he at once becomes a noticeable figure and an object of suspicion. This fact is, however, so little known to the general public that amateur criminals are often detected by foolish efforts to disguise their appearances with artificial hirsute adornments.

In 1908 the German murderer Karl Hau was traced by means of a false beard that he wore in the streets of Frankfurt a/M prior to his flight to England. His uncouth appearance made him a marked man all along his line of flight, with the result that he was

A male spy alters his appearance by setting out on one mission cleanshaven and letting his beard grow for the next, if he has sufficient time between, for the addition of a genuine beard or even a moustache disguises him completely from the eye of an inexperienced observer, although it would not deceive a trained inspector from Scotland Yard, who identifies his quarry by the shape of ears or nose, while many a criminal has been recognised by the tell-tale individuality of the back of his head, which can never be altered.

Wigs are easily recognised as such by a trained eye, although male agents sometimes alter the appearance by dyeing the hair. But this disguise is often recognisable, so that here the woman has an advantage over the man, because the practice of using hair-dyes is common enough with her sex to spare her any undue conspicuousness.

False wigs and beards can be donned for special occasions at night when darkness and artificial light soften the incongruity of the disguise. By wearing them for a short time in a bad light and then discarding them a spy may make a useful change of appearance. But as for the theatrical grease-paint which spies and detectives of fiction use to change themselves from old men into young or vice versa, it would betray its wearer at the first glance. The face can be altered in shape by pads worn inside the mouth (an uncomfortable process) and the use of spectacles is quite an

But the spy's best disguise is a capacity to act the part, to really live in the character he or she assumes. Care must be taken to acquire all necessary knowledge concerning the business or profession that is to be assumed, for numerous agents have been detected by ignorance of details with which the assumed character ought to be familiar. A typical instance in this respect is provided by the two Dutchmen, Jannsen and Roos, who entered the German Intelligence Service and visited British naval ports as travellers in tobacco. They sent home their information by means of a code in which different brands of cigars were made to stand for battleships, cruisers, etc. Unluckily for them, neither the British sailor nor the British civilian is a heavy smoker of cigars, the pipe or the 'gasper' being the favourite form of nicotine absorption in this country. In Holland cigars are cheap enough to be smoked by the poorer classes of the population, but in Britain their price places them beyond the reach of all save financiers and profiteers.

Jannsen and Roos were sailors, capable of appreciating the worth of any information they picked up. But they were ignorant of the essential fact which every traveller in tobacco would know, namely that it was useless to expect to book orders for large quantities of cigars in any British provincial town. When, therefore, the Censor reviewed their correspondence and noted the enormous quantities of cigars they consigned to Portsmouth, Plymouth, etc., he promptly suspected a code. Enquiries in Holland

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elicited the information that their 'head office' in Amsterdam did its business in too small a fashion to cope with even half the orders Messrs. Jannsen and Roos were supposed to obtain, being in fact merely a cover for a German *letterbox*. The two Dutchmen were arrested and duly ended their lives in the Tower.

The gallant Lody was betrayed by bad acting. Posing as an American and consequently a neutral, he sent a telegram to a Swede in Stockholm about some seemingly harmless business, but added a few words expressing his delight at a German defeat. Now it has always been a custom to cut down the words of a telegram to the barest minimum on grounds of economy, and when one neutral wastes money in cabling his joy over a belligerent's defeat to another neutral, the censorial authorities are bound to smell a rat. Lody's telegram to Stockholm was the first slip that put the British police on his track.

Very few women would have made such a stupid blunder. Women possess far greater dramatic talents than men, and their superior acting capabilities far outweigh their difficulties in disguising themselves. Moreover the woman agent can make good use of her personal charms to extract information from male victims.

A typical instance of the power of this last asset was shown by the work of the Belgian girl, Sylma van Quickelberghe, one of the most talented amateur spies that her nation's emergency brought into action. Nineteen years of age, with a perfect figure and a fascinating mop of black hair, she was not slow to recognise the magnetic quality of her charms on the German soldiers with whom she came in contact. She danced with them in the public house her father kept, and whenever she went to the Dutch frontier to make purchases, she always brought back a packet

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of fragrant cigars for each of her admirers, who never dreamed that the Belgian Intelligence Service paid for the gifts. Her wheedling, coaxing ways extracted favours from the frontier guards, who invariably looked the other way when she wanted to make a trip into Holland at unlawful hours.

At length the German counterspies on the Dutch side became suspicious, with the result that they soon traced her connection with their opposite numbers in British and Belgian service. A sergeant who made a practice of closing his eyes when she slipped past the barriers at night was arrested, and orders were given to seize her when she returned to Belgium from her next trip, as it was thus hoped to catch her with compromising documents on her person.

But the Belgian spies in Holland were likewise on the alert, so that Sylma received timely warning. There is a story that she returned as far as the barrier, where from the safety of Dutch soil she told the Germans she had so long bamboozled what she really thought of them, but its authenticity cannot be vouched. The fact remains that she stayed in Holland for the remainder of the war.

In the previous chapter mention has been made of Mlle. C., the daughter of a Ghent hotel-keeper, who was ready to pass the night with any German officer from whom she hoped to extract information. This procedure is expected of professional female agents, whose charms are sufficiently attractive to influence their victims, and their duties as regards the proper use of personal attractions are usually explained in unmistakable terms by their employers. But feminine charm is a double-edged weapon, likely at any unexpected moment to recoil with disastrous consequences.

Fräulein E. was an Austrian, a charming lady of

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Vienna, who entered the British Intelligence Service from pure love of adventure. She had expressed herself perfectly willingly to become the mistress of any individual she was commanded to fascinate in the ordinary way of business, and several times she thus succeeded in obtaining results where male agents had failed ignominiously.

But on one occasion she was instructed to make herself agreeable to a young German staff officer charged with an important mission in Switzerland. Posing as a lady of independent means and patronising the best hotels, she found no difficulty in making her prospective victim's acquaintance, and it was not long before he began to show himself sensible to her charms. Matters seemed to be progressing to a successful end.

Then one day Fräulein E. suddenly appeared in the offices of the British Intelligence Service in Zürich and demanded to see the chief. When shown into his room she flung down on the table a wad of notes given her for expenses and burst into a fit of hysterical weeping.

At last she grew calmer, and the explanation was forthcoming. She had fallen in love with the man on whom she was ordered to spy, and nothing would induce her to continue the mission.

Protests, remonstrances and persuasions alike proved unavailing. The German officer carried out his plans unmolested, and the British Intelligence Service chiefs were left pondering on the advisability of employing women as agents. A similar adventure which befell a young Danish girl they employed in Copenhagen—an incident that furnishes an almost exact parallel to the above case—gave them further food for thought.

There is no doubt that Mata Hari, the famous Japanese dancer, executed at Vincennes in 1917,

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was influenced by a love affair. At one period of her career she volunteered her services as a nurse and succeeded in getting herself attached to the hospital at Vittel, where she became an object of suspicion to the French counterspies who inferred that she was far more interested in the secrets of the new aerodome than the sufferings of the wounded. But despite her numerous flirtations with the pilots, she was deeply in love with Captain Maroff, a Russian officer who lay blinded and helpless in the hospital, and at her trial it was admitted that her behaviour was scrupulously correct at that period.

Although much has been written about Mata Hari, it is not commonly known that one of the strongest links in the chain of evidence against her was forged by another woman, Hanna Wittig, a Swiss subject, of German origin, and the daughter of a veterinary surgeon in Zürich. Fräulein Wittig had been trained as a nurse and was employed in a hospital which contained a number of French officers exchanged as incapacitated prisoners of war,* and among her patients was a certain Comte de Chilly who had fallen, badly wounded, into German hands the previous year. As so often happens, nurse and patient fell in love with one another.

Comte de Chilly was discharged from hospital and permitted to reside at Lausanne, where he had complete liberty of movement. Being an ardent patriot and finding himself bored with the prospect of enforced idleness, he volunteered to serve as a spy in Switzerland. Despite her German blood, Fräulein Wittig was fired by his enthusiasm and offered to do her best to assist the country she proposed to adopt

* In 1916 Britain and France concluded an agreement with Germany, by virtue of which prisoners of war no longer fit for military service were sent to Switzerland to recover their health under conditions more favourable than those afforded by a prison camp.

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by marriage. At de Chilly's instance, she resigned her post in the hospital and took up her quarters in an expensive hotel known to be patronised by German agents.

It was not long before she was rewarded by overhearing a conversation between two Germans, in the course of which the activities of 'H.21' were frequently mentioned. Fräulein Wittig informed the count, who took prompt steps to communicate with Captain Ladoux of the French Intelligence Service.

This latter inferred from the report that 'H.21' must be a female agent who resided in France or was at least in a position to make long visits to the country. He had been shadowing Mata Hari, against whom nothing definite was proved, although several of his colleagues were convinced of her guilt. Others, however, held that the recent leakage of information that engrossed their attention could only be due to the work of that gifted German spy, 'Mlle. Docteur.' Ladoux himself was inclined to hold Mata Hari responsible, but at that time his theories did not receive from his superiors the attention they merited.

Ladoux paid a visit to Switzerland, where he had a long talk with de Chilly and Fräulein Wittig, with the result that he took the Swiss girl back to Paris and lodged her in the hotel where Mata Hari was staying, with instructions to make the famous dancer's acquaintance and win her confidence. Fräulein Wittig seems to have played her part perfectly, posing as a simple maiden somewhat dazzled by the love of a distinguished French aristocrat and doubtful of her ability to ensure his constancy. She humbly begged Mata Hari, who had been the lover of so many famous men, to take her under her wing and impart some instruction in the ways of the world.

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The dancer's pride was flattered into granting the request. For several weeks the two women were inseparable; confidences were exchanged, and Mata Hari, unwilling that her young disciple in the art of love should think that she had gained the means to live in luxury by the profession of a courtesan, hinted that she received large sums of money as a spy.

This was repeated to Ladoux, who passed on the information to his superiors. But it was not considered sufficient proof to warrant the arrest of Mata Hari, as she could easily deny the unsubstantiated accusation and possessed influential friends in France who would have protested against extreme steps taken on the evidence of a romantic girl whose eagerness to serve her lover's cause might easily lead her to exaggerations. The French authorities decided to adopt the middle course of safety and deport her.

Had she accepted their decision, all would have been well with her, and she might have continued her espionage unmolested in a neutral country. But instead of bowing to the inevitable, she protested vigorously that she had never committed any hostile act against France, the country which she loved and longed to serve. She ended up by volunteering to act as a secret agent for the French Intelligence Service.

Her motives puzzled Ladoux, who was evidently unaware of her relations with the blinded Russian captain. As a matter of fact she was afraid she might never see Maroff again if she was expelled from France and therefore determined to maintain her foothold in the country at any cost. Her offer of espionage for France was accepted, but the French Intelligence chiefs laid a trap for her. She was ordered to go to Brussels to worm herself into the good graces of

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General von Bissing, the governor of Belgium, and given letters of recommendation to six French residential agents there.

Mata Hari duly went to Brussels, where she appears to have lost her head. To maintain her reputation with the German Intelligence Service and show good reason for her departure from Paris she reported that she had made a sham offer to work for France in order to lull the suspicions of French counterspies. Had she been content to let the matter rest at that, she might have successfully kept a foot in either camp, but when she handed over her letters of recommendation to the German Intelligence chiefs, she compromised herself irretrievably with the French, for five of the introductions were made out to men who had been detected by the Germans and saved their lives by promising to work for Germany. The sixth was addressed to an agent suspected of working for several different employers on both sides.

Him the Germans arrested and shot; shortly afterwards British agents in Holland reported to their French colleagues that a man working for them had been denounced by a female international spy who had but recently arrived in Belgium.

Then follows an incident in Mata Hari's career that has never been properly explained. She was sent by the German Intelligence Service to Spain, and sailed on a Dutch boat from Rotterdam, which called at an English port en route. There she could have been justifiably arrested, as the execution of the unfortunate double agent was clear proof that she was in German pay, but for some reason she was allowed to proceed to Spain, where British and French agents reported her to be in touch with the German military and naval attachés at Madrid.

She remained only a short time in Spain; then, for

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reasons unknown, she decided to return to Holland. But the ship on which she sailed was held up by a British torpedo-boat, the commander of which declared himself under instructions to convey her to London. Mata Hari did not appear concerned, but exerted herself to fascinate the officers, who were delighted to have the monotony of the voyage relieved by the presence of such a charming lady.

From Southampton she was taken by car to London and deposited at Scotland Yard, where for many hours she remained closeted with Sir Basil Thompson. What they said to one another will ever remain a secret, but that night she was put on board a boat sailing for Spain.

Her second sojourn on Spanish soil was longer than her first, and once again she was reported to be on intimate terms with the officials of the German Embassy. Then, suddenly, she departed for France.

Her arrival was expected. A wireless message from Herr von Kroon, the German naval attaché at Madrid, to the chief of the German Intelligence Service in Amsterdam was intercepted at the Eiffel Tower station and decoded, with the result that the French authorities learnt that a bank had instructions to cash a cheque to the value of 15,000 pesetas (about £600) made out in favour of their agent, H.21. The police arrested her the day after she reached Paris.

It is strange that Mata Hari ventured into France when she must have known the danger awaiting her, for she had received ample warning that her actions were suspected by the French counter-espionage chiefs. Sir Basil Thompson is likely to have given her strong hints which she could not afford to disregard. It is said that as her financial resources were at an end she was faced with the alternatives of poverty or the acceptance of dangerous missions. This is not true.

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In the course of her adventurous career she was the mistress of many men, and as her charms were undimmed at the time of her arrest, she could have enjoyed a life of luxury as a courtesan, had she chosen to do so. Moreover she had undoubtedly made a success as a dancer of exotic oriental dances, and at that period (1917) the world craved for amusement as a distraction from the ever-increasing horrors of war. The enhanced value of the peseta and numerous lucrative contracts brought wealth to Spain, so that there was ample money to pay her price as either dancer or courtesan. The real fact of the matter is that she was willing to undertake any risk that would bring her nearer to Captain Maroff.

At her trial the evidence against her, much of which was furnished by Ladoux, was too damning to be ignored, and although many influences were exerted to save her, the death sentence was confirmed. About her last hours many legends are extant. One relates that she ascended the car that was to bear her to Vincennes wrapped in a fur cloak, and when the final moment came she threw it away to reveal her body in complete nudity, hoping that the firing-party would refuse to carry out its orders. Another story asserts that she received a hint that the rifles would be loaded with blank cartridges and she must feign death, so that afterwards she could be quietly smuggled out of the country. A third account describes her as behaving hysterically and kissing her hands to the soldiers of the firing-party.

For none of these is there any foundation, but it is undoubtedly true that she was given a chance of a respite by a plea of pregnancy, which would have postponed the execution long enough for the influences at work on her behalf to act effectively. With the abating of the panic caused by the activities of the

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defeatist propaganda engineered by Germany, there would have been a swing of public opinion in her favour. Why she refused to avail herself of this last opportunity, no one knows, possibly because no one has troubled to trace the subsequent history of Captain Maroff. Her hopeless passion for the Russian was the cause of her resolution to die.

An authentic photograph shows her at the execution post, clad in a simple dress of black or some sombre hue. She refused the bandage for her eyes and was inclined to resist when the time came to bind her hands to the *poteau*, but on the officer in charge assuring her that this was the usual custom, she submitted with a good grace.

"Tell them to aim at my heart and spare my face," were her last words, and thus died Mata Hari, one of the most romantic (though not the most skilled) spies of the Great War.

The assistance rendered by Hanna Wittig to Captain Ladoux was largely instrumental in bringing Mata Hari to her doom, but when the Swiss girl realised the consequences of her intimacy with the dancer she was overcome with remorse. She married Comte de Chilly, but neither his love nor the luxuries procurable by his wealth could banish Mata Hari's tragic image from her mind. In search of distraction, she took up film acting and showed sufficient talent to warrant the prospect of a successful career, but not even the excitements of a filmstar's life could still the sufferings of her tortured mind. In 1928 she committed suicide by shooting herself.

To turn from the romantic to the sordid, the affair of Mme. Tichelly, executed at Vincennes on March 15th, 1917, presents repulsive aspects that have no parallel in the recent war, nor, one may imagine, in any preceding war.

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Mme. Tichelly was of pure French origin, but had imbibed Teutonic sympathies during a long residence in Germany. When enrolled in the German Intelligence Service, she was employed as a chambermaid in a Mannheim hotel, but after a period of training in a spy school, she was sent to France, via Switzerland, and on arrival in Paris gave out that after being left unmolested for nearly a year she had been deported at a moment's notice as an alien enemy. She was full of indignation at the brutal treatment she had received from the German police and expressed her joy to be in her native land, in whose army her son was serving.

Mme. Tichelly obtained employment at a factory in a Parisian suburb, where munitions were manufactured. She noted all the details of the various operations and sent detailed reports to Germany. When she knew all that there was to be learnt there, she left on some pretext, and the general scarcity of labour soon enabled her to secure work elsewhere. This process she repeated, and as she possessed an observant eye and was painstaking in her reports the information she sent to Germany gave her employers an accurate idea of the output from the various types of factories that supplied the needs of the armies at the front.

Her reports were written on thin slips of paper inserted between two postcards which she stuck together so effectively that for a long time they reached their destination unsuspected by the Censor. At last, however, it struck one of the examiners of correspondence as curious that she always wrote postcards to her friend in Switzerland but never indulged in a letter; her cards were therefore subjected to a closer scrutiny, and the trick was discovered.

In addition to supplying the German Intelligence

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Service with technical information about the factories in which she worked, Mme. Tichelly procured a useful budget of news from the front. Cultivating friendships with the women working beside her, she found no difficulty in persuading them to show her their letters from sons, husbands and brothers serving in the trenches, which related the hundred and one details of life at the front and thus gave the Germans a good notion of the military movements in various sectors.

At her trial it came out that her information enabled the German forces to inflict severe losses on the regiment in which her son served, for she had always passed on the news she obtained from his letters. When asked by her judges whether she did not realise that she might have been the direct cause of his death, she stared at them in uncomprehending amazement. Her callous disregard of all maternal feeling which sealed her fate persisted to the end, and she faced the firing-party with the aggrieved air of a martyr. She had never killed anyone with her own hands, she reiterated, and it was therefore unjust that she should suffer the doom of a murderess.

To set a woman to catch a woman is an excellent principle in espionage, as shown by the instance of Hanna Wittig and Mata Hari. Fräulein E. was often used for this purpose, especially after the experience which showed that the emotions of her heart were liable to exercise a decisive influence upon her operations against male subjects. She did good service in helping to unravel the intricacies of the Solange case, one of the strangest episodes in the recent war.

‘Mlle Solange’ (her real name cannot be given because she was a member of an ancient and honourable family that has served France for generations)

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was nurse employed at a field hospital behind a sector in the Argonne, where she had acquired a reputation for skill and diligence. Her family name placed her above suspicion, so that no one thought of enquiring into the significance of the map pinned to the wall of her bedroom in the cottage where she was billeted. It was a large-scale map of France and Belgium, showing the long line of trenches running from the North Sea to the Swiss frontier, and on it were stuck a number of little flags representing the brigades and divisions of the contending armies. It was, in fact, a map similar to those which countless amateur strategists kept in their homes during the first few months of the war.

But 'Mlle Solange' was able to mark the positions of the contending forces with greater accuracy than the aforesaid students of military operations, because every day wounded men from the places where the flags were pinned passed through her hands. Under stress of excitement entailed by wounds soldiers' tongues are loosened, and often an anaesthetic has the effect of causing the patient to babble freely, if inconsequently, about many things concerning which he would have been reticent in normal circumstances. It was therefore no wonder that 'Mlle. Solange,' in constant attendance on so many sufferers, found frequent opportunities to correct the positions of her flags from information received in the course of her duties.

At the same time she showed herself far from insensible to masculine society in her leisure hours, being particularly susceptible to the attentions of several artillery officers attached to batteries in the Argonne. These gentlemen delighted to spend their leisure hours in her society, and as the nature of their work rendered it impossible for more than one

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of them to be on leave at a time, each firmly believed himself to be the swain to whom the fair nurse had given her heart. All of them chattered freely about their work, and none evinced reluctance to answer some rather technical questions, which proceeding from the mouth of a male acquaintance, would have at once rendered him an object of suspicion. It was therefore a very long time before anyone connected Mlle. Solange with the information reaching the enemy from Argonne, even though Fräulein E. in Switzerland reported that the purveyor of unlawful news could only be a nurse working in a field hospital.

After two male agents had been sent down to the Argonne and failed to locate the spy, Fräulein E. was given leave by her British employers to assist them. In the garb of a hospital nurse she often made investigations among the crowds of non-combatants expelled from the occupied territories by the German military authorities and repatriated via Switzerland in search for the German spies that so frequently mingled with them, for the influx of a large number of distressed women and children into France gave the enemy an excellent opportunity of slipping his female agents across the frontier. Fräulein E. was therefore well acquainted with the role of a nurse and as she spoke French without an accent, she took her place in the field hospital in the Argonne without arousing suspicion.

In less than a week she made up her mind that Mlle. Solange was the spy, but could not ascertain how she despatched her reports. Her correspondence was admitted by the censorship to be above suspicion, and she was never seen in association with any dubious individual; practically all her spare time seemed to be spent in the company of one or other of

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the gallant artillerymen who sought her company so eagerly.

Finally, however, it was noted that she was in the habit of giving letters to hospital patients about to be transported to the interior or orderlies going on leave, on the excuse that they could post them for her under conditions ensuring a speedier delivery. A letter taken from one of these involuntary accomplices and addressed to a neutral subject practising as a dentist in Paris revealed traces of invisible ink when tested.

Mlle. Solange was arrested when performing her hospital duties, greatly to the amazement of doctors and patients, but when she was examined in prison, she refused to answer any questions put to her.

She remained in a state of apathy and constantly complained of violent headaches. Every day she was questioned by the police, but remained dumbly obstinate, and for some time it seemed as if neither threats nor persuasions would yield results. But at last the third degree methods employed by the French police proved successful, for one day she broke down and confessed between violent sobs that she loved France and would as willingly shed her blood as any of the men at the front, but a mysterious, invisible power forced her to betray her country.

At first the police could not credit the tale she told. During a visit to Paris she had suffered from toothache, and as her regular dentist was at the front, she went to a new man whose skill was highly recommended by a friend. This dentist had no difficulty in eliciting that she was a nurse in a hospital behind the lines, whereupon he promptly commanded her to obey him, and such was his power that she had to submit as though she was his slave.

In short the dentist had hypnotised her. Under his

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orders she extracted information from the wounded men in her charge and, although she knew perfectly well what she did, her will was too weak to oppose the dominant force that dictated her actions.

Mlle. Solange never appeared before a courtmartial, because the specialists who examined her confirmed the truth of her statements. She was, in fact, the most perfect hypnotic subject they had encountered, and they considered it quite possible for anyone possessing the necessary powers to put her in a state of trance. As she was obviously not responsible for her actions, the affair was hushed up, and the neutral dentist assisted her relatives to preserve the desirable secrecy, for when the police came to arrest him, he was not to be found. Either his instinct or a friend had warned him of impending danger, and he vanished without leaving a single clue.

The nature of their calling, which brings them into contact with all sorts of people, makes espionage easy for members of the theatrical and music-hall professions. In the spring of 1918 two cabaret singers were shot at Nantes for espionage, both being female members of a gang that made a speciality of extracting information from seamen. In view of the German submarine menace and the necessity for safeguarding convoys and troopships, the French authorities felt bound to make a severe example of the culprits, who might otherwise have escaped with sentences of imprisonment as being merely subordinate members of the band. Its leader, a Spaniard, received timely warning and fled southward with French counter-spies at his heels. He reached his native land through one of the Pyrenean passes after an exciting chase, in the course of which he gained the safety of neutral soil only a few minutes in advance of his pursuers.

The opportunities for spying afforded by the

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profession of a public entertainer were realised by a young lady from Lorraine, who developed into one of Germany's best spies. She had French blood in her veins and spoke the language without a trace of an accent, besides being fluent in English. Her usual sphere of activity was Copenhagen, where her charms exercised a peculiar attraction over Russians, and she was thus able to unmask several Russian spies who endeavoured to enter Germany via Denmark.

Later she volunteered to undertake a mission in England, where she adopted the disguise of an 'equestrienne.' She was familiar with horses from her infancy and after a short course of lessons in Germany acquired sufficient skill in trick riding to obtain an engagement in any circus. As the graceful artiste who leaps through the hoops and alights on the horse's back she toured England, and her circus did its best business in seaports or army centres where she found ample opportunities for gaining valuable information. Later she operated in Sweden, where she contrived to steal important despatches from a French courier travelling from Petrograd to Paris.

She had no need of the money she earned, and her salary was probably insufficient to meet her dress-maker's bills, as she had entered the German Intelligence Service from pure love of adventure and excitement.

Another agent of a similar type was the lady known as Mlle. Flora, who rendered much good service to the Entente cause. Her real name is her own secret, which will never be penetrated, and even her nationality is unknown. It is asserted that she spoke English with a trace of an Irish accent, but other indications suggest that she was of Austrian parentage. In any case she spoke half a dozen languages fluently and appeared to be endowed with inexhaustible financial

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resources. She had the entrée into diplomatic circles, and in Rome she was a frequent guest at the palace of the distinguished Italian man of letters, Count Primoli.

In matters of espionage her method never varied ; she exercised her feminine charms on the man who held the information she required and persisted until he began to make love to her. Then her success was a foregone conclusion.

Even when circumstances played into the hands of her opponents, she could count on her natural attractions to turn the situation to her advantage. On one occasion she was instructed to purloin some highly confidential documents from a German agent in Switzerland and contrived to make his acquaintance in a fashionable hotel at Montreux.

She was painfully surprised to find that, although far from insensible to her charms, he possessed an obstinate head that refused to allow its plans to be dominated by affairs of the heart. He studiously refrained from inviting her to his private apartments, where his secret documents were kept, and, indeed, exercised such caution that he would only allow the hotel servants to clean the room where they were kept under his personal supervision.

Having endowed himself with the title of Professor, so beloved of his countrymen, he told the manager of the hotel that he was in charge of a set of priceless archæological manuscripts that could not be handled by anyone save himself and his secretary and that his work would be injured if these documents were disturbed by the carelessness of a chambermaid. When the room was cleaned, he must, therefore, be present to ensure that all papers were kept in their proper places.

Mlle. Flora redoubled her attentions and at last

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succeeded in extracting from the pseudo-professor an invitation to supper. Matters began to look more hopeful.

She contrived an opportunity to be left alone for a few minutes in the room where the spy's secrets were lodged and promptly began to make a collection of the most promising papers. But before her task was half completed, the door opened suddenly, and the next moment she felt her wrists unceremoniously gripped by the Professor's secretary.

Mlle. Flora was fairly trapped. The spy had suspected her all along, but, sensing that her fascinations were sufficiently potent to force him to some imprudent act if she continued to tempt him, he took his secretary into his confidence. The latter agreed to shadow Mlle. Flora whenever she was in his master's company and thus found an opportunity to arrest her depredations in the very nick of time.

Great was the Professor's anger, and he decided to hand the lady over to the police, to be dealt with as a common thief. But Mlle. Flora pleaded for another chance, and at last her captors' hearts began to soften. Then she proposed a bargain.

She had a working knowledge, she told them, of several secret codes employed by Entente agents, which she would be willing to sell to them in return for her freedom. The two Germans accepted the offer and spent the greater part of the night jotting down the words and figures she dictated. The codes appeared genuine; the transaction was completed, and Mlle. Flora departed in peace.

But a few days later the professor received a sharp reprimand from his superiors, for the codes he sent them proved useless when tested practically. Subsequent investigations revealed them as genuine, but they had been superseded several months previously

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by their users. The worthy professor and his secretary were thus neatly hoodwinked by the fair Mlle. Flora.

At least, however, the vigilance of his secretary prevented him from being robbed, so that the episode may be fairly summed up as a drawn battle. Knowing the frailty of man where woman is concerned, Intelligences often supply their male agents with female confederates, who are naturally proof against the blandishments of their own sex. This plan of setting a woman to catch a woman led to the undoing of a certain M. Pricard and two female accomplices, one of whom posed as his niece.

All three were French traitors in German pay, and between them they contrived to transmit to Germany via Spain much important information concerning the movements of the American armies in France. Pricard operated at Romorantin, in the department of Loire-et-Cher, which was an important American base; he put his country residence at the disposal of American officers for their mess establishment and soon became indispensable to the permanent staff, who entrusted him with their catering arrangements.

Posing as a man anxious to do his bit, although precluded by age from serving in the trenches, he spent much time with the officers, who appreciated the hospitality of his charming home. They chattered freely about themselves and their occupations to M. Pricard and his pretty, blonde niece, Marcelle, who proved a sympathetic listener and an able instructress in the French language. Occasionally she made trips to Paris to visit relations, and the gallant officers at Romorantin found time hang heavy on their hands till she returned.

Meanwhile the French counterspies discovered a leakage of information, which grew too serious

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to be ignored. As the American Intelligence Service was in a rudimentary state, General Pershing applied to London for assistance, and a British agent, Captain Walton, was sent to make a special investigation. This co-operation between the British and American Intelligences occurred frequently during the latter part of the war, generally with beneficial results to both parties.

But on this occasion Captain Walton had no easy task. His suspicions fell on M. Pricard and his charming niece, but the American officers who had received so much hospitality and kindness from them were unanimous in their indignation at what they termed the 'Paul Pry' tactics of an interfering Britisher. They refused to hear a word against their hosts, put every possible difficulty in Walton's way and even petitioned General Pershing to have him removed from their midst for conduct unworthy of a gentleman.

General Pershing had employed Walton before and knew his value; he therefore turned a deaf ear to their remonstrances and instructed them to give the Englishman every facility for his work. Yet even so Walton might have failed, had he not been provided with a female assistant, 'Mlle. Yvonne,' who posed as his secretary. This lady set herself to cultivate the friendship of Pricard's niece, whose frequent journeys to Paris rendered it likely that she was his letterbox.

The two girls grew to be inseparable friends, but Yvonne found Marcelle ever ready with some plausible excuse for reticence whenever she tried to worm out the secret. As matters were getting desperate, Yvonne decided on a desperate remedy, and one day when the two were lunching in a restaurant she surreptitiously introduced the contents of a small packet into Marcelle's glass. Almost immediately

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afterwards the latter was seized by sudden spasms of pain and forced to leave the table. Yvonne went out to help her and contrived to extract from her dress a packet of letters.

They were Pricard's reports, destined for a certain Mme. Brouchard in Paris, who also made a point of cultivating the society of American officers. In the course of her conversations with them she acquired many facts which enabled her to check and supplement her colleague's reports before forwarding them to the German Intelligence Bureau in Barcelona. She was shot along with Pricard in the autumn of 1918, and Marcelle's youth did not save her from sharing their fate. All three had served the Germans solely for the financial rewards their work brought them.

From the point of view of excitement espionage appeals to women, but out of the volunteers that besieged the Intelligences of all belligerents at the outbreak of hostilities only few proved themselves sufficiently reliable agents to be worthy of permanent employment. Some were daunted by the drudgery that spying necessarily involves, while others could not overcome their disappointment at the lack of quick success. A third type was so eager to win distinction that its representatives had no scruples in doctoring their reports to accentuate their own prowess. In such cases their lively imaginations speedily brought about dismissal.

A typical instance of such unreliability was afforded by a young Italian lady of noble family who moved in the best society in Rome. Gifted with genuine talent for spying, she was engaged to survey the activities of the French Military Mission in the Italian capital, for, surprising as it may seem to the uninitiated, every nation spies on its allies as well as its enemies. This principle is accepted as a very necessary pre-

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caution, and generally foments no ill-will on either side.

The lady, as aforesaid, possessed all the necessary gifts, and might have proved a real acquisition to her employers but for her incorrigible tendency to exaggeration. Whenever she was thwarted in obtaining genuine information, her fertile brain manufactured interesting news items, which subsequent events showed to be fictitious. Time after time she was warned to exercise a check on her nimble pen, until at last she took umbrage at a merited reproof from a superior one day and threw up her post in a fit of temper.

Shortly afterwards her engagement was announced to a handsome young French aviator, whose acquaintance she had made in the course of her work. This was unwelcome news to her former chiefs, who feared that the future husband would soon be in possession of much undesirable information, but her position in Roman society and the influence wielded by her distinguished relations were factors that could not be discounted. Any measures taken against her would have precipitated a scandal that everyone wished to avoid, so, putting the best face on the matter, Intelligence gave the young couple its blessing.

But a few days before the wedding the bride, who was as fickle in love as in war, eloped with an American officer, whom she ultimately married. Intelligence could only shrug its shoulders and wish her happiness in her adopted country.

CHAPTER XI

TWO REMARKABLE WOMEN

A vivid contrast to the conduct of the young lady cited at the end of the previous chapter is the inflexible tenacity evinced by Gabriële Petit, the Belgian amateur spy, who knew that the work she voluntarily undertook must ultimately lead to her detection and death, but carried it through without flinching until overtaken by the fate she foresaw. She has been almost canonised as the Belgian national heroine, for she may be said to occupy in her country's esteem the same veneration accorded to Joan of Arc in France.

She was born at Tournai, close to the French frontier, in 1893, so that when the war broke out she had barely attained her majority. Left an orphan at an early age, she received a convent education, afterwards passing into the care of her aunt, Mme. Ségur, of Brussels, who found her a post in one of the chief millinery establishments of the Belgian capital. During her sojourn at the convent she learnt the German language, which in the daily round of her profession she found good opportunities to practice, as Brussels was visited by many German tourists prior to the war. Her linguistic achievements were to stand her in good stead later on.

In the turmoil of the German invasion of Belgium, many British, French and Belgian soldiers were isolated from their units and compelled to take refuge

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in the houses of civilians, who gladly sheltered them. Some of these men were wounded, but their hosts nursed them and concealed them from the Germans.

When they recovered they desired to rejoin their regiments and take their places in the trenches. At first this was comparatively easy, especially for those hidden in houses near the Dutch frontier, but as time went on and the Germans established a firm hold on the land, they naturally took measures to hinder the exodus. Any Entente soldier who remained hidden in Belgium for some time had opportunities of gathering many details concerning the methods and movements of the armies of occupation; if therefore he succeeded in rejoining the Entente forces, his value was considerably greater than that of an extra rifleman in the trenches, for he was in the possession of information likely to prove extremely serviceable to his cause. Consequently the German military authorities placarded the walls and hoardings of every town and village with warning notices, similar to the following, which is an authentic translation of a poster exhibited in Antwerp.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GERMAN MILITARY AUTHORITY

Any inhabitant of the City of Antwerp in whose house there are wounded or who knows where wounded are must notify the fact to the Office of the Commander within 48 hours.

All infringements will be rigorously punished in accordance with Martial Law.

Certified as a true copy and for communication,
Antwerp,

18th October, 1914.

Jan de Vos,

Burgomaster.

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Such warnings had little effect, for the Belgian population obstinately refused to surrender the fugitives, whom they endeavoured to smuggle across the frontier. As every man, woman and child was ready to assist the neighbours in the good work of furthering the Allied cause, there came into existence loose organisations of citizens willing to undertake the risks involved by secret disobedience of German regulations. These were known as 'Les Grues de Famille,' which may be roughly translated as 'The Clans.'

Edith Cavell worked in co-operation with these Clans, which found civilian clothing for the soldiers in her hospital when they were cured, provided them with false papers and eventually led them across the frontier on dark nights under the charge of experienced guides. For assisting the Clans and helping to smuggle out of Belgium in civilian clothing men who were potential bearers of secret information, Miss Cavell undoubtedly offended against the regulations of Martial Law, even though she acted from the highest motives, and now that time has softened the bitterness of feeling aroused by her execution, the justice of the German courtmartial's sentence can no longer be denied, although its severity was excessive and evoked protests even in Germany. For if she never committed an act of espionage, she assisted spies, because all soldiers disguised in civilian clothing behind the enemy's lines are reckoned as such.

Edith Cavell was denounced by a Belgian named Armand Jeannes, who entered the German counter-espionage department and was foolish enough to brag of his achievements, with the result that he ultimately paid the penalty for his treason. But the revelations emanating from the Cavell trial implicated many Belgians engaged in the work of smuggling soldiers

- From these activities a system of espionage came into existence automatically. Holland swarmed with British, French and Belgian Intelligence Agents, whose duty it was to collect information from the occupied territory, and under their supervision regular services of couriers were established to carry the reports collected in Belgium across the frontier and return with instructions for the spies. Such a courier was Gabrièle Petit, who is said to have made more than twenty journeys to Holland and back during the few months of her activity.

She is alleged to have often gone about in the disguise of a German officer, but of this there is no confirmation. When she was arrested an officer's papers were found on her, but she refused to say how they came into her possession. It seems more likely that they were forged by some skilled member of the Clans and destined for the use of a male spy, who could have turned them to better account. An experienced spy does not usually resort to a change of sex as such disguises are difficult to maintain. A

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man masquerading in female garb has the difficult task of continually securing sufficient privacy to use the razor he must conceal about his person, and readers will remember the case of Ethel Le Neve, the mistress of Dr. Crippen, who attempted to reach America disguised as a boy. Her incongruous figure was one of the first clues that put the police on the scent.

Nevertheless the legend of a Belgian woman in German uniform persists. The same tale is told about Louise de Buttignies (Alice Dubois), another celebrated Belgian amateur spy, who died in hospital at Cologne a few months before the Armistice would have freed her from the term of imprisonment to which her death sentence was commuted. Again there is no proof of the story, which is probably merely one of the legends that are apt to accumulate around the personalities of famous spies.

Gabrièle Petit began her work as a member of the Clans and was at first entrusted with minor tasks which did not entail giving up her situation. She made the acquaintance of Miss Cavell and was under her orders for a time; at her trial she stated that it had been a great pleasure to her to work under 'such a highly gifted lady.' It is uncertain when she took the step of devoting her entire activities to espionage, but in all probability she was one of the volunteers who offered to fill up the gaps caused by the numerous arrests following Miss Cavell's trial. On this occasion the German counter-espionage had scored a noted success as no less than thirty-five clever workers were put out of action at a single blow.

Gabrièle's favourite disguise was that of a newspaper-seller. German officers were wont to stop and chat with the pretty girl who spoke their language so well and sometimes told them that she was born

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in Berlin. For this disguise she procured a set of false papers made out in the name of *Hélène Legrand*.

Meanwhile the patriotic owner of the millinery shop which had formerly employed her allowed her to work there whenever she found it convenient. She thus succeeded in establishing a dual personality as the smartly-dressed worker in a fashionable shop, a demure young lady, very correct and circumspect, and the ragged paper-seller, pert and cheery, with a ready answer for any customer who bandied words with her. She had the true spy's gift of being able to live in either personality when she assumed the clothes that belonged to it.

At first she only worked with her own countrymen, but on a voyage to Folkestone she was watched and questioned by a British agent, with the result that she was enrolled as a member of the British Intelligence Service. In her capacity of courier she carried many communications to and from British residential agents in Belgium.

On one occasion she was commissioned to procure executioners for a Belgian named *Ledoi* who worked for the Germans. She chose two Frenchmen and the brother of a girl friend living at Charleroi, promising all three that she would lead them to safety in Holland as soon as the deed was accomplished. She undertook the preliminary shadowing of *Ledoi* herself and finally, posing as a German agent, contrived to lure him into the wood where the executioners were waiting for him. A grim, informal trial took place; the accused asserted that his connections with the German counter-espionage were merely a bluff to mask patriotic work, but incriminating papers found on him proved his guilt. The three men led him into the depths of the wood, while *Gabrièle* went back to her friend's house and waited calmly until

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they returned to announce that justice was done and the body buried. The following night she guided the executioners into Holland, as she had promised.

For a long time the Germans were bamboozled by the double personality of Gabriële Petit and Hélène Legrand. On her journeys to the frontier she adopted several other disguises, often travelling as a peasant girl on her way home to her native village and sometimes as a nurse summoned to an urgent case. At last a German Intelligence agent contrived to ascertain the meeting-place of a convoy of young men who were being escorted out of the country to join the Belgian army, and it was rumoured that Gabriële Petit was to accompany them.

Unfortunately for his chances of success the agent was burdened with a Belgian female assistant who proved his undoing, for the landlord of the inn at Bouchoute, where the fugitives were supposed to meet, contrived to make her drunk. Meanwhile the convoy crossed the frontier and ultimately reached Folkestone via Flushing. On her return Gabriële decided to turn the tables on her shadowers, as she was told that they were still in Holland. Ascertaining their hotel in Flushing, she obtained a room next to the one they occupied when posing as man and wife, and, listening through the thin wall, overheard them say that "it was no good bothering any more about the Petit girl, who will have enough sense to lie low in Folkestone for a bit. But with luck we ought to nab Jean this time."

She suspected them to be talking about Jean Bordin, another Belgian courier, who made monthly journeys into Holland, and the following day she ascertained at the Belgian Consulate that he was in Flushing. Enquiries showed him to be shadowed by German

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agents; it was therefore decided that he should remain in Holland for the present, while Gabriële volunteered to deliver his despatches in addition to her own. This mission she decided to carry out in the guise of a shabby hawker.

She also had the dangerous task of warning Bordin's mother that her son was safe but unable to return to Belgium, and when she entered the street where the old woman lived, she noticed at its corner a man whose attitude seemed to her suspicious. On offering her wares to him, she was repulsed with a curt negative.

She knew that if he was a German spy she would at once attract his attention by proceeding directly to the house where Mme. Bordin's flat was situated. She therefore went into the first house in the street, offering her goods in every flat. House after house she thus visited, hoping that the German police would not arrive before she had time to fulfil her errand.

Luckily all was still quiet in the street when she reached the building where Madame Bordin lived. She climbed the stairs and hurriedly gave the old woman news of Jean's safety, together with his instructions to burn a packet of papers that would have compromised a number of spies. Mme. Bordin thrust them in the stove, and Gabriële Petit went off to sell her wares at the other flats in the same house. Just as she was leaving, the man she had seen in the street hurried in, accompanied by two others. They stopped her and examined her tray, but finding nothing suspicious, let her go and hastened up the stairs to interview Mme. Bordin. As soon as they were out of sight, Gabriële entered another house, where she managed to remain concealed until the police left the street after a fruitless search.

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Eventually the Germans ascertained the password of the Clan with which she worked, and on a day when she proposed to leave Brussels for the frontier, an agent came to her in disguise and asked her to carry for him a plan of some German batteries on the Yser, which he alleged to have been obtained that very day. It was highly important that it should reach the British G.H.Q. as soon as possible.

She felt an instinctive suspicion of the man, whose face she had never seen before, but outwardly there was nothing to show that he was not what he pretended to be. Realising that if he was genuine, she would do wrong to refuse his request, she assented, and a couple of hours later she was arrested when she left her aunt's house.

She managed to swallow the small aluminium tube which contained her despatches, written on thin paper, but her captors noticed the action. She was taken to the nearest police station and forced to disgorge the tube by means of a powerful emetic.

At her trial she made no attempt to deny the charges against her. She declared that she had only served her country's interests, as was right that she should.

Her youth and beauty inclined the courtmartial to take a lenient view of the case, but her resolute attitude made it impossible for them to do otherwise than pass the death-sentence, for when asked whether she would give her word to refrain from further espionage if released, she replied that on the contrary she would start again the moment she was free. Later she was offered a pardon if she would reveal the methods by which she and others crossed the frontier, but she refused indignantly.

On political grounds General von Bissing, the Governor of Belgium, was anxious to have the death

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sentence commuted, but the military authorities insisted on its retention, and there was much friction between the two parties in consequence. At the last moment the papal nuncio pleaded vainly on her behalf.

She heard the news of her impending death with composure and when she received the farewell visits of her aunt and sister, proved calm enough to restrain them from breaking down. She spent the last evening knitting in her cell and chatting with the German guard in charge of her.

On the morning of April 1st, 1916, she was shot at the Tir National, the scene of the execution of Miss Cavell and many other victims in the Belgian cause. She refused the bandage for her eyes and died with the words "Vive le roi" on her lips. After the war her remains were reinterred in a cemetery near Brussels with much pomp. Cardinal Mercier pronounced her eulogy before a large assembly, and in Tournai she is commemorated by a tablet affixed to the house in which she was born.

Unlike other famous spies, who adopted their profession from desire of adventure, she had been actuated solely by motives of patriotism. She was, therefore, unable to be turned from her purpose by the hardships that her work involved, nor was she deterred by any foreboding of the inevitable fate that befell, sooner or later, all who undertook similar risks. She was one of the most ruthless spies that ever set out to damage an enemy's interests.

Much has been written concerning another female agent who proved herself as redoubtable and ruthless as Gabriële Petit, though from other motives. So many exploits have been credited to this lady, known to the world as 'Mademoiselle Docteur,' that her legendary fame bids fair to eclipse that of Mata Hari,

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who, after all, was not a great spy. Mlle. Docteur was a queen of spies.

The tales that originate from French and Belgian sources depict her as the centre of a vast spider's web of espionage embracing the war area of northern France and all the British naval bases, but there seems to be no confirmation for this imaginary picture of her activities. On the contrary, all indications go to prove that she was a great executant, but not an organiser. She was a star artist who liked to play a leading part without too many assistants to hamper her rather than a stagemanager manipulating the movements of innumerable secret players on the boards of that great theatre of espionage.

It is commonly asserted that she was the mistress of a German general in Belgium who allowed her to try her hand at espionage for her own amusement and was genuinely surprised when she developed unexpected talents that brought her rapidly to the front. Incredible exploits, far beyond the bounds of possibility, are attributed to her, and many are the varying accounts of her origin. Yet when her legendary personality is stripped of all the accretions clinging to it, what remains is as romantic as any tale written about a heroine of fiction.*

She was not, as is commonly supposed, a recruit to the ranks of espionage during the emergencies of war, but had proved her value to the German Intelligence Service in the preceding years. The war gave her opportunities to excel, and she seized them with all the tigerish energy she could muster. She was not beautiful at that period, although those who came into

* It is not even known how she obtained the nickname of "Mademoiselle Docteur," though it is presumed to have originated from some occasion when she performed a mission in a disguise that entailed the wearing of those large spectacles commonly affected by German bluestockings.

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contact with her thought that they could recognise traces of former charms.

The truth is that during the war she was a drug addict, who could only work by virtue of the stimulus to which she resorted.

It was the drug she so constantly took that imparted to her eyes the feverish brilliancy that made such an impression upon all who worked in her immediate circle.

Her real name appears to have been Annemarie Lesser, and she was a native of Berlin, where her father lived in comfortable circumstances. She was an abnormally precocious child, for at the age of 16 she became the mistress of Captain von Wynanky, a dashing officer in a cavalry regiment, who was a gifted, ambitious man.

But her love brought him little luck, for when her father came to know of the affair, he turned her out of his house, so that von Wynanky, who felt himself responsible for her future maintenance, soon found life in a hussar regiment too great a strain on his purse when he had to meet the expenses of two persons instead of one. He exchanged into an Engineer regiment, where his expenses were less, and contrived to manage for a few months until new troubles came upon him. The Wynanky estate in East Prussia, in which he had a financial interest, had been so badly mismanaged by his elder brother that it had to be sold to satisfy the demands of the creditors; nothing was left over from the wreck, and the unfortunate officer now found himself without any monetary resources outside his pay.

For a time he struggled to make both ends meet, but fell hopelessly into debt, so that his commanding officer saw himself compelled to take the usual course of asking him to clear himself or send in his papers.

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In despair, von Wynanky appealed to a friend on the General Staff to procure him some sort of employment that would allow him to settle with his creditors and keep his mistress in moderate comfort. The upshot was a probationary engagement in the German Intelligence Service.

Von Wynanky appears to have survived preliminary tests and made good, so that he became a regular member of the select corps that Colonel Nicolai was building up. But he was very troubled about the future Annemarie, to whom, contrary to instructions, he had confided the real nature of his employment. Every time he went abroad on a secret mission she fretted so much that her health began to suffer, and as the doctor who prescribed for her had to be kept in ignorance of the real cause of her anxiety, he was frankly baffled by the case. One thing, however, was certain; unless something could be done to relieve the tension of her mind, she was bound to decline into an early grave.

Von Wynanky's work in the German Intelligence Service must have covered the period when the General Staff accumulated the information that enabled the Teutonic hosts to brush aside all opposition in their drive through Belgium in the autumn of 1915, for there seems little doubt that this stroke was carefully planned years in advance. The work of the German military spies in Belgium, as revealed by the arrest and execution of Ehrhardt, the chief of the German Intelligence Bureau in Antwerp, is in itself proof of this premeditation. Colonel Nicolai admits that Ehrhardt was one of his ablest assistants.

Be that as it may, von Wynanky received instructions one day to make a survey of the Meuse country between Toul and Dinant, and as he imagined that

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the work could be carried out without arousing suspicion of French or Belgian counterspies, he hit upon the idea of taking Annemarie with him, so as to convince by practical demonstration that his work was by no means as dangerous as she imagined.

The plan was successful; when allowed to accompany him, the girl threw off her nervous fears, and under the influence of the holiday spirit that prevailed their trip, her health began to mend. Before long she found herself deriving keen enjoyment from the thrills of the spy-game.

As a result she accompanied her lover on further missions. His superiors were at first inclined to protest, but when he explained the circumstances, they winked at the irregularity. Besides, the girl showed that she had a real talent for spying, for although hysterical if left behind she never lost her head when taking part in his work. She soon proved herself to be an able co-operator as well as a companion; speaking French fluently, she chattered to the peasants and workmen so that she constantly picked up scraps of information that were of real value to von Wynanky. Moreover she was a good actress, who could devise little scenes to make their activities seem harmless.

Sometimes she posed as a landscape painter with an easel; on other occasions she was an amateur botanist in search of unfamiliar specimens. She always took the trouble to acquire a working knowledge of the hobby chosen to mask their business.

She also asked intelligent questions about the technical side of espionage and eagerly absorbed the information her lover imparted. Her health improved rapidly, and she had almost regained her normal state when the next blow fell.

They were operating in the neighbourhood of Sedan,

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where von Wynanky had been sent to report on the frontier fortifications, and one night Annemarie woke him up and declared that they were watched. Nothing would satisfy her but that they must take the first train back to Germany. Von Wynanky, who was not feeling well, was inclined to pooh-pooh her forebodings, but she insisted, and in the end he gave way.

She was right, for she possessed the mysterious sixth sense of scenting the proximity of unseen watchers, that is so valuable to detectives and Intelligence agents. When they reached the station they were subjected to the inquisitive gaze of a man whom Annemarie recognised as a customer of the little inn where they had slept, but on that occasion he had worn the garb of a workman, whereas several days previously she remembered having seen him in the uniform of a forester. She whispered her suspicions to her lover, and they slipped out of a side entrance and made for the open country.

They were followed, but the girl kept her head and planned a series of manœuvres which brought them over the Belgian frontier after a long chase; at Charleroi they caught the Cologne express. In the train von Wynanky complained of violent pains, and when they reached their destination, he was unable to walk. An ambulance bore him to a hospital, where he died that night of appendicitis.

With his death Annemarie's love-life was extinguished for ever. Despite her youth their union was the result of a great and lasting passion, so that when the object of her love was snatched away, life had nothing more to offer. She was indifferent to the callous behaviour of von Wynanky's relations, who refused to let her attend his funeral, but she did not even desire to be present at his grave because she had

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made up her mind to join him in the undiscovered country beyond the tomb. For her journey thither the dainty little revolver he had given her would suffice, but before she could use it she had a mission to perform. Von Wynanky's relatives were ignorant of his real vocation, and she saw no reason why they should be enlightened. It was therefore her duty to go to Berlin and hand over to his superiors the fruits of his last expedition.

It so happened that when she came to report, a high officer of the General Staff was present. Owing to his sudden illness, von Wynanky had not been in a state to complete his work, so that in his report there was much that needed elucidation. To the amazement of all present, and most especially of the staff officer, the little wisp of a girl with the white face and tragic eyes began to give the necessary explanations. Here, she pointed out, was the line of the strategic railway, and there were the entrenchments made by the French army in their manœuvres, and though that sketch of a fort was incomplete, she could fill it in from memory if they would allow her.

But all the time she was waiting for the moment when she would be free to join her lover. Some inkling of her intention must have flitted through the mind of von Wynanky's immediate superior, a man whose name appears to have been Matthesius, for when the staff officer took his departure, he asked Annemarie to remain behind on the pretext of some small matter that still required explanation. That night she lodged at his house, and the little revolver was surreptitiously removed from her bag.

Matthesius, a kindly man, resolved to look after the girl until she could be settled in some occupation that offered her an assured living. But when he asked her what she would like to do, she merely shook her

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head. It did not matter what became of her now, she repeated, and the sooner her life was finished, the better.

Matthesius remonstrated; he was certain, he assured her, that von Wynanky would not have wished such a sacrifice. After all, she was young, and time would soften the blow. The main thing was for her to secure some employment that would take her thoughts off her grief.

He questioned her as to her capabilities and suggested an introduction to friends who might employ her as a governess. She shook her head; such work would give her too much leisure to brood. He then asked whether she would like to study painting, for which he saw that she had genuine talent, but again she refused. Painting would remind her of the trips with Carl, when palette and easel were part of her equipment. To other suggestions she likewise turned a deaf ear. Matthesius was in despair, when suddenly with some hesitation, she made the proposal that she might be allowed to continue her dead lover's work. It was the only employment, she declared, that would never leave her time to think.

That was how Annemarie came to join the German Intelligence Service. She did not win her way without opposition, for Matthesius' superiors protested vigorously against the employment of a young girl on such dangerous missions. To their remonstrances he replied that she would seek danger of her own accord if they refused.

Here we have the secret of Mlle. Docteur's success. She was indifferent to the perils she encountered because death was merely the gateway to reunion with her Carl, and she did not care how soon she passed through. Meanwhile she was ready to carry on 'his work.'

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Despite opposition Matthesius had his way, and she was sent on a mission to the French Vosges. Whether he really believed in her ability, we cannot tell; perhaps he merely intended to give her an opportunity to find out how unfitted she was for Intelligence work, after which she would find it easier to settle down to some domestic occupation. If so, he was mistaken, for she returned with photographs and sketches of an unsuspected innovation in the French artillery, which proved to be valuable news for the German General Staff.

Every summer she went forth on such missions. Her sphere of operations embraced Germany's French and Belgian frontiers, but it seems certain that she paid at least one visit to the Isle of Wight, which boasted a large German clientèle before the war. There she studied the Portsmouth defences.

In the winter she remained in Berlin, where Matthesius taught her many things likely to be of use in her profession. Under his guidance she perused handbooks of military and naval information, checking the accuracy of their facts by data based on the secret reports in the archives of the German Intelligence Service. Her superior also put her through a course of military history and made her study technical works on the sciences of fortifications, siege and field artillery, etc. What she learnt would have qualified her for the post of a staff officer, had she been of the opposite sex.

One thing is remarkable about her career as a spy. Wherever she went, she had hosts of male admirers until the ravages of the morphia she used to still the pain of leisure hours had left its mark on her, but although ready to fascinate them by flirtations, there is no evidence that she ever became any man's mistress. In this way she forms a striking contrast to the great

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majority of female agents, who rely on the charms of their bodies as the surest means to success. But Annemarie would have regarded such acts as treason to the memory of von Wynanky, and if, as a last resort, she did give herself, it can only have been with the utmost reluctance. At all events there was no danger of her ever spoiling her work by falling in love with one of her victims, for as long as reason remained to her, she never ceased to regard herself as belonging to von Wynanky alone.

It is difficult to form a clear picture of her achievements during the war. Such was her reputation that friends and enemies have united to credit her with many feats for which other German agents ought to have the praise. No doubt the German authorities found it good policy to allow her the kudos for such successes, as they were thus able to create in the Entente camp the impression of a super-spy bound to succeed in everything she undertook. On the other hand the German Intelligence Service has shrouded many of her exploits in a veil of secrecy that has never yet been pierced. In all probability it will remain impenetrable.

As far as can be gathered, the outbreak of hostilities found her in Italy, studying coastal fortifications, a very necessary precaution in view of the dubious attitude of the third partner to the Triple Alliance. Afterwards she probably went to Paris, where French agents were afterwards known to have been baffled by the swift movements of a woman spy, but in any case she did not stay long there. It is quite likely that she went on to Belgium, the country she knew best of all, and there is a story current in Germany that the signal for General Emmich to begin his assault on Liège was the arrival at his outposts of a German woman, disguised as a Belgian peasant, who was held

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a prisoner while the officer in charge of her telegraphed to Berlin to ascertain if her claim to be a member of the German Intelligence Service was really true. Meanwhile she rated him roundly for his stupidity.

This sounds like Mlle. Docteur's methods, for it is added that she saw to it that the officer received an official reprimand for his clumsiness. She was always ruthless to subordinates who failed to reach the standards she expected of them.

Afterwards she remained in Berlin for a while on counter-espionage work. The quick forward movement of the German armies did not leave much scope for the spies of either side, although Colonel Nicolai blames General Emmich for leaving his chief Intelligence officer behind in Liège as 'unnecessary ballast,' while the fighting-men pressed onward.

Nevertheless she may have been of more use in Berlin, where she is said to have unmasked several French spies, among whom were two officers who in the hustle and bustle of the first few weeks had actually contrived to secure positions in the German Intelligence Service.

Meanwhile Colonel Nicolai was working hard to repair the damage done by the arrests of German spies in England, France and Belgium. Annemarie took her share in the drudgery of reorganisation, though she made persistent requests to be sent on missions to enemy country. It was about this time that she began to use morphia and cocaine injections.

She made some mistakes; Lody and several other ill-fated spies whom the British police quickly detected were her pupils; later, however, she paid a personal visit to England, where she succeeded in establishing a staff of residential agents.

She was also several times in Paris, where her presence was badly needed. Germany had a capable

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man in charge there, an elderly Frenchman, who covered his activities by a motor-tyre agency. He appears to have done good work for a while, but his country's losses on the battlefield proved his downfall, for one day, to his surprise, he received mobilisation orders, whereupon he committed suicide.

Mlle. Docteur took his place for a time, but was not always happy in her choice of agents. One, a Greek, was tempted to betray her by the prospects of a large reward offered for her capture, but she learnt of his impending treachery from a sergeant attached to the French Counter-espionage Service, who was allowed to believe himself engaged to her. Quickly getting in touch with the Greek, she announced that his chiefs had decided to pay him a large bonus as a reward for special services, gave him an appointment to meet the man who would hand over the money and a letter to identify him to this person. She then wrote an anonymous letter to the French police, denouncing the Greek as a German spy and stating that he could be found at a certain café the following night at 7.0 p.m., when he was due to meet Mlle. Docteur. The Greek was arrested, and on him was discovered the letter she had given him. It was carefully worded so as to conceal her identity, but proved sufficiently compromising to serve as his death-warrant. If he offered any explanation about the person who gave it him, he was not likely to be believed. At any rate he was duly executed.

Mlle. Docteur made short work of any subordinate who showed signs of weakness or treachery. The story of the doom that overtook the Dutchman, Van Kaarbeck, one of her pupils, who was foolish enough to disclose his real profession when under the influence of alcohol, may well be true. In this

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case the French police decided to refrain from arresting him in the hope that they might track down his confederates by shadowing him, but their vigilance did not prevent him from being murdered in a lonely street in Montmartre. He was found dead with a knife between his shoulders, which bore the name of a German manufacturer in Sölingen; once again Mlle. Docteur succeeded in closing the lips of an untrustworthy agent before he could betray her.

She may have struck the fatal blow herself, as it seems likely that she was in Paris at the time. But the incident, taken in conjunction with the previous one, shows her tendency to grave mistakes in the choice of her assistants, for a drink-sodden degenerate like Van Kaarbeck was the last sort of person to make a successful secret agent.

It may be, however, that she was fully aware of his short-comings and made deliberate use of him as a fool-spy to mask the activities of some skilled agent operating simultaneously in the same locality. There was, it must be admitted, the danger that he might betray her, but she could afford to take the risk. As we have already noted, death would have been a welcome release to her.

There is another story current in Entente lands that one of her subordinates sent her detailed plans of the famous Tanks, but that she refused to believe in the practicality of such contrivances and after the battle of Cambrai put the blame on a German engineer officer who had advised her not to trouble his superiors with such obvious fairy tales. It is said that she forced him to commit suicide when the Tanks had proved their worth, but this story must be accepted with the strictest reserve, for her pre-war training under Matthesius would have enabled her to form her own judgment without having recourse

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to the advice of a third party. If she had cherished doubts, she would have referred the matter to Matthesius, under whose orders she remained for the whole of the war. There is no doubt that the Germans did get wind of the construction of these new engines of war before they came into action, but we have the statement of Colonel Nicolai, a man who is surely entitled to speak with authority, that the plans of the tanks that were submitted to the German G.H.Q. were drawn up in accordance with detailed information received from a British mechanic who was rescued from the wreck of the first of these vehicles to be disabled by the German artillery.

The man, who had worked in the factory where they were made, was so badly unnerved by his experiences that he told his captors everything, but when his information was submitted to the German G.H.Q., they refused to credit it at first.

Mlle. Docteur did much useful work behind the German front, and as a detector of French spies she was invaluable. She was responsible for the discovery of a network of spies operating along the lines of communication in 1915, but the German police left them undisturbed until January 1916, just before the attack on Verdun, when some sixty were arrested on a single day. The result was that the attack on Verdun came as a surprise, which enabled the German forces to capture Forts Douamont and Vaux. The whole business was a severe blow to the French Intelligence Service, and for many months after the coup the occupied parts of France were free from spies.

But this kind of work did not interest Annemarie who always hungered after special missions in enemy country where her life depended on her skill in acting

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the part she had chosen to play. This was the only kind of work that could absorb her entire energies and thus keep her thoughts off the dead von Wynanky. Like Gabrièle Petit and others, she is said to have worn an officer's uniform, but again we have no confirmation for these stories. It must be remembered that although her knowledge of the French language and her familiarity with the habits and manners of French officers would have permitted her to play such a part well, her frail figure would have rendered it impossible for her to 'dress' it.

In 1917, clever work by the French Counter-espionage Department made it possible to locate nearly all the German spies residing in France. Four chief agents received timely warning and succeeded in escaping into Spain, but most of their subordinates were arrested. From Berlin a score of determined men were despatched to take their places, but it was obvious that they, too, would be tracked down ere long unless special measures could be taken to ensure their safety. Annemarie volunteered to go to Paris and look into the matter.

This was a mission after her own heart. She reached the French capital in this disguise of a Norman peasant girl in search of employment, armed with papers in perfect order and a number of references that certified her honesty and diligence. With a perfect Norman accent she asserted that she had been discharged because her last employers, an English family, decided to return to their own land.

She might have obtained several jobs, for willing workers were at a premium, but made excuses to refuse them all until at last she secured a situation in a large house used as headquarters by the French Counter-espionage Department. The first floor was given over to offices; on the second were bedrooms for

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the use of agents arriving from the provinces and elsewhere, while on the top storey Annemarie shared an attic with three other girls. Her duties were to clean out the offices and attend to the bedrooms of the informal hotel's ever-changing, fleeting guests. The hours were long and the wages poor, so that it is a wonder how she contrived to find time and privacy to use the morphia syringe, to which she resorted ever more frequently.

Outwardly she was the dullest and stupidest of the four maids employed by the establishment, and the other three continually found excuses to saddle her with more than her fair share of the work. There was one task which the girls particularly detested; two agents remained constantly on night duty, but as they slept on the premises during the day, their rooms had to be cleaned in the small hours of the morning when they assumed their vigil after the last of the regular staff had gone home. The maids were supposed to take this duty in turn, but after a while the other three clubbed together and persuaded the stupid Norman to undertake their nights for an extra trifle.

Mlle. Docteur made friends with the two watchmen, but saw that she could not effect her purpose as long as they were together. Each, however, was allowed an alternate Sunday off which thus gave her a chance.

One Sunday, when the man in charge was sufficiently accustomed to the comings and goings of the Norman maid, she entered his office and began to chat. Being glad of company during his lonely hours, he was completely off his guard, so that she found little difficulty in chloroforming him by a sudden movement that allowed her to slip an impregnated cloth over his mouth and nostrils. Then she went through the offices at her leisure.

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In the bundle that constituted her luggage was a fashionable dress, which she managed to don without awaking the other girls. Then she walked downstairs and marched boldly out of the front door. The exterior of the house was surveyed by a night-watchman, but so many people passed through its portals at all hours that there was nothing suspicious about the departure of a stylishly dressed lady just as dawn was breaking. She was, to outward appearances, merely a female agent of the French Intelligence Service.

But on the following day all was turmoil and confusion when the watchman was found insensible on the floor. All indications pointed to the missing Norman maid as the thief who had put him out of action ; instructions were telegraphed and telephoned to the frontier to detain any woman bearing the slightest resemblance to her, and several suspects were arrested. But in the end they had to release them and admit defeat, though how Annemarie crossed into Switzerland remains her own secret.

She deposited at her Berlin headquarters a complete list of all French counterspies working in their own and neutral countries, with descriptions of their personal appearances and methods of operation, so that the German agents could be warned against the traps likely to be set for them. Her raid had also gained her the names of some French spies stationed in Germany, as a result of which a number of arrests followed her return from Paris. But the hard work and poor food told on her impaired constitution, and she did not leave Germany again that year, although she worked with Matthesius in his office. Often, however, she remained secluded in her room for days at a stretch, and in addition to the morphia, she now needed large quantities of alcohol to stimulate her brain into activity. Those who knew her in the days

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when she accompanied von Wynanky on his expeditions were shocked at her altered appearance.

1918 came and brought Germany's long-heralded spring offensive. But it did not produce the expected success; high officers at the German G.H.Q. began to wear anxious faces. Unless the blow had struck deeper than superficial signs showed, unless France was inwardly bleeding to death, black days were in store for the Central Powers. The last reserves in men and material were exhausted.

Once more Mlle. Docteur was approached to undertake a mission to France. Her superiors desired her to ascertain the facts of the real situation, which none of the residential agents seemed able to fathom. Possibly she might even gain some precious knowledge that would make it possible for the German forces to rally for a last, supreme effort. Left the usual free hand as to the methods on which she would operate, she decided to enter France via Spain, and probably reached the latter country by a submarine. In the late spring or early summer of 1918 she was in Barcelona, posing as the wife of a rich Argentine ranch-owner and full of enthusiasm for the Entente. Soon she gathered around her a band of Spanish women of like views and obtained permission for a small number of Red Cross workers to visit the French and British field-hospitals on the western front. As the leader and inspirer of the movement, she naturally formed one of the delegation of seven that received facilities from the French government.

What exactly happened on this, her last, mission, will never be known. She certainly made a tour of the front with six Spanish ladies, none of whom had the slightest inkling of her identity, and she must have found many opportunities to see things that told their tale to her expert eye. There is a story related

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in Germany that when helping at a field hospital she was recognised by a wounded Belgian officer whom she had duped when spying in his country before the war, but made a sudden dash for liberty and succeeded in reaching the German trenches. Such a feat would be quite in accordance with her usual audacity, but unfortunately corroboration is lacking. The incident, as related in Germany, would have taken place before a considerable number of witnesses, so that we should have been bound to receive some version of it from Entente sources had it really occurred. As such evidence has not come to light, the story must be dismissed as one of the legends bound to accumulate around her personality.

In all probability she finished her tour and returned to report that the game was up and she could do nothing to counteract the overwhelming forces that the Entente could now place in the field. At all events she undertook no further missions.

The German Government seems to have shown gratitude for the services its greatest spy had rendered. She was given every care and attention, but her case was beyond medical skill. As soon as she ceased to work, she fell into a state of apathy, from which nothing could rouse her. It is certain that she received several offers to work for foreign powers at her own price ; the Tsarist counter-revolutionaries in particular were anxious to enlist her services against the Bolsheviks, but she refused all offers.

Finally, under the influence of the drugs, her mind gave way. She now lives in a sanatorium in Switzerland, where two trained nurses watch her by day and night. Often she is said to babble of her many exploits, pouring out to her attendants incoherent tales of many places and persons. But the name most frequently on her lips is that of Carl von Wynanky.

CHAPTER XII

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

As the preceding chapters have recorded the triumphs of Intelligence as exemplified by the achievements of spies and counterspies, it is only fair to show the reverse side of the medal and chronicle some failures of the secret forces. There were at least three occasions when the whole course of the war (and perhaps of subsequent history) might have been changed if Intelligence had delivered the necessary information.

So much has been written about the misfortunes of the ill-fated Dardanelles Expeditionary Force that it is superfluous to recapitulate the details of the campaign. Briefly, in March 1915, British warships bombarded the forts overlooking the narrow straits leading into the sea of Marmora. Later, transports bore troops to the scene of action, and at the sacrifice of many lives landings were effected at several points. During the summer several fierce battles were fought, but the Turkish defenders, under their able German commander, General Liman von Sanders, effectively barred the way to Constantinople. Although the British troops maintained their positions on the Gallipoli peninsula, it was eventually decided to withdraw them, and in the following winter the troops re-embarked. Constantinople remained in Turkish hands.

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In early 1916 many rumours were current concerning the Dardanelles campaign. It was whispered that on several occasions the British held Constantinople within their grasp, but failed to close their hands on the prize. So pessimistic were the Turks about the fate of their capital, it was said, that the Government officials had packed up their archives, and on the further side of the Bosphorus a train waited to carry them into the interior of Asia Minor.

But, after all, these were only rumours, upon which little reliance could be placed. Direct confirmation was lacking, and it was far from easy to obtain any certainty.

The rumours increased. In the early months of 1916 two young Americans reached Switzerland from Constantinople, where they were employed as teachers in the well-known Robert College. They confirmed the assertion that the Turkish authorities had abandoned Constantinople, for they had received instructions concerning the immediate future of their institution when the British landed.

The Turkish losses were frightful, they said. The shells of the Queen Elizabeth had wrought so much havoc on the forts and lines of communication that the hospitals were filled to overflowing, and in the summer, when the British Expeditionary Force landed, the same tension prevailed. Time after time, the two Americans stated, the Turkish defenders sustained such heavy casualties that they were ready to yield their positions at the next assault, but on each such occasion they were unaccountably given a breathing-space.

The hospitals were short of bandages and every kind of medical appliance; the staffs were unable to cope with the thousands of wounded. The two Americans, together with many other European

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residents of Constantinople, volunteered to help at these hospitals, where British and French joined with Germans and Austrians in the work of mercy. The scenes these two young men witnessed were indescribable, for the Turk, never a good organiser, was utterly demoralised, and the efforts of his German allies were powerless to stem the tide of panic.

But again it may be urged that the impressions of these two witnesses cannot be taken as confirmation of the fact that Constantinople was on the point of surrendering. They were not soldiers; they had never been to the front; they merely repeated the rumours current on the lips of all inhabitants of the Turkish capital. Though strong presumptions may be drawn from their evidence, it cannot be regarded as final.

But later in that year a pleasant-faced, fair-haired man reached Zürich and sojourned for a few days in a *pension* where foreigners of all nationalities resided. Something indescribable about his bearing told the observant eye that the garments he wore were of a sort that had long been unfamiliar to him, and a certain look in his eyes, together with his tanned cheeks, would have proclaimed his element to a fellow of his kind.

This gentleman was, in fact, a seaman; he was, moreover, a German naval officer, who had held an important post in the batteries that overlooked the Dardanelles. He was on his way home, released for a holiday when the passing of the crisis permitted his superiors to dispense with his services, and he intended to enjoy part of his leave in neutral Switzerland.

He was an affable fellow, as most seamen are, and quite ready to chat with all and sundry, including subjects of the Entente states residing in the same

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pension. He had no prejudices against them, in fact he rather liked living under the same roof with them, for their presence gave an unwarlike atmosphere, and he had had enough of war for the time being. And he was quite ready to talk about his war experiences.

The keynote of his discourse was the Turkish lack of organisation. Not only the medicaments for the hospital, but the shells for the batteries he commanded were too often conspicuous by their absence. He stated frankly that only the superhuman efforts of his German colleagues succeeded in providing his gunners with a moderately regular supply of munitions.

On one occasion, however, the ammunition columns broke down completely, and for the space of four hours the batteries on both sides of the straits were without a single shell to reply to the British warships that lay out in the Aegean. Had they attacked then, the defence must perforce have remained silent, and the assailants could have steamed past them unmolested to take Constantinople.

The British fleet approached ; it looked as if an attack was impending. The German officer and his colleagues knew that for the space of four hours no munitions could reach them. They could only wait and pray.

For four hours the British fleet lay in the offing, while Constantinople waited to be captured. Then, after hours that seemed like years, the shells arrived. Shortly afterwards the British fleet attacked, but now the batteries could reply, and Constantinople was saved.

If Intelligence had informed Admiral de Roebeck of the breakdown of the Turkish ammunition columns. Constantinople must have fallen, and the war would have been curtailed by three years, if we may believe the opinions of those who planned the Dardanelles campaign.

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

The possession of Constantinople by the Allies would have ensured regular transport of arms and munitions to the Russian front, where they were badly needed, thus enabling the Grand Duke Nicholas, the greatest strategist of the war according to the expert opinion of at least one German military historian, to make a stand, for the German offensive that drove him out of Russian Poland and gave his opposite number the key positions of Warsaw, and Brest Litowsk owed its success mainly to the Russian lack of arms and munitions. In some parts of the Russian line there was one rifle to every five men.

Yet despite these drawbacks the Grand Duke hammered the demoralised Austrians, so that in the spring of 1915, the fortress of Przemyśl fell. With adequate munitions the advantage could have been pressed home, and the fall of Constantinople would have brought Bulgaria, Greece and Rumania into the field on the Entente side. Joined with Serbia, they could have attacked the tottering Austrian Empire from the south. Austria would have collapsed as she did in 1918, and Germany, isolated on all sides, would have had to face armies on the western front strengthened by the thousands of men who shed their blood on Gallipoli's beaches. The odds would have been too great for Germany.

A few weeks later the Entente had another chance of striking a deadly blow, had Intelligence been able to furnish the information required to direct it.

In May, 1915, Italy decided to join the Allies. For some time she had wavered; Entente propaganda had shown her how she could liberate the Italians still living under Austrian rule if she entered the war on the side of the Allies, and the Austrian Ambassador in Rome had made an offer to cede the major portion of the unredeemed lands as the price of neutrality.

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He did so unwillingly, but Germany put pressure on his government ; at all costs Italy must be prevented from adding her armies to those already arrayed against the Central Powers. The offer was rejected as insufficient ; Austria could bid no more, and so in May, 1915, Italy declared war.

Austria had recovered to some extent from the blows dealt her by the Grand Duke Nicholas. Reorganised by Germany's General Staff, the forces of the Dual Monarchy rallied, and in the long-drawn battle of the Carpathians the Russian advance was stemmed and thrown back. Austria was on her feet again, though still dizzy from her efforts, and a fresh blow, dealt with the vigour of untired forces, would send her toppling once more.

This blow the Italian armies were expected to deliver, and the events of the first few days in the new theatre of war gave evidence that they intended to strike it, for from all directions came the news of a victorious advance.

In the high mountains that flanked the Swiss frontier Austrian troops maintained their impregnable positions, but to the eastward of the Alpine masses Riva and Ala had fallen. Italian forces were pressing up the Adige valley, so that only the Rovereto garrison barred their way to Trento. Yet further to the east Italians were swarming into the Dolomite passes, and although the foe's positions along the line of the Carnic Alps were still intact, Gradisca had been won. But the best news came from the Adriatic coast, where the minor Austrian naval base of Monfalcone was reported to be in Italian hands. Several Austrian warships were the spoils of the victors, whose armies were now within twenty miles of the great city of Trieste, Austria's principle port, the capital of the Istrian peninsula and the key to the Adriatic.

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

The Italian people and their allies waited for the blow to fall, but from the Adriatic front came silence. For some mysterious reason the Italian advance came to a standstill.

The delay was afterwards shown to be due to over-caution on the part of General Cadorna, who grew alarmed at the unexpectedly rapid progress and feared a trap. But had he possessed spies in Trieste competent to inform him of the true situation, he would have continued his advance with all confidence, for between him and the great objectives were only a few mere handfuls of Austrians, utterly incapable of stopping him.

The Austrians are an amiable, artistic folk, liked by all who come in contact with them, but they lack the organising capacity of their German brethren. Although the possibility of war with Italy had loomed for several months, the Austrian military authorities were so occupied with their misfortunes in Galicia and the unexpected resistance offered by the Serbians on their southern front, that they neglected to make adequate preparations against the new assailant.

Many inhabitants of Trieste have since testified that in those first few days of the new war the Austrian civil and military rulers of their city were in a state of panic. Many officials left for the interior, and the scanty garrison was under orders to evacuate the positions it was incapable of defending. The troops were on the point of leaving, but the Italians did not come. So they stayed, and more than three years of war elapsed before the great city fell.

In May, 1915 the capture of Trieste would have been attended with serious consequences for Austria. Barely ten miles from the city runs the only railway line connecting Pola, Austria's war-harbour, with the interior, and the forward rush would have put

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Italy in possession of this line. Situated at the extreme edge of the barren Istrian peninsula, Pola could have been blockaded and starved into surrender within a few weeks, while another fifteen miles advance would have cut the railway from Lubliana to Fiume. If the Hungarian port, then solely dependent for communication with the interior on the Zagreb line, had likewise fallen, as well it might have, the Austrian fleet was doomed. There was no other harbour on the Dalmatian coast capable of sheltering it.

Austria's prestige would have suffered such a blow that the populations of Dalmatia and Croatia would have risen; the infection would have spread to the other heterogenous races forming the Austrian Empire. Rumania would have inevitably entered the war eighteen months earlier, and the Dual Monarchy must have made a separate peace or collapsed as it did in 1918.

It is now a matter of common knowledge that Austria made several attempts to negotiate a separate peace at different times, but obstinacy over minor points and German influence combined to prevent preliminary discussions from yielding any results. The Austrian government knew well enough the slender hold it maintained on its subject races, and the fall of Trieste might well have been the signal for general rebellion. But General Cadorna received no message from Intelligence, and so the Austrian flag continued to wave over Trieste.

In the summer of 1917, the German armies on the western front had an open road to Paris for a brief space, but did not learn of its existence until it had been barred again. This unaccepted chance of victory was due to the Nivelle Offensive and the subsequent mutiny in the French army.

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

All through the previous year the British forces had borne the brunt of the attacks on the western front so as to allow the French to recuperate from the losses entailed by their heroic defence of Verdun. The Somme Offensive was costly in men and material, while, regarded from the map, it did not show great territorial gains. But it had shaken the enemy's resistance, and in addition to holding their lines in France the Germans were compelled to expend much energy in supporting their Austrian allies, who were sorely pressed by General Brussiloff's forward movement in Galicia and the Italian Carso Offensive that won Gorizia. In the winter of 1916-17 hostilities were not suspended to the same extent as in former years, for Marshal Haig thought that the possession of Peronne, St. Quentin and Bapaume would give him a strategic advantage sufficient to force the Germans out of Flanders.

Bapaume, the last of these objectives, fell in the early spring, but the German Higher Command frustrated British efforts by withdrawing the front troops to positions previously prepared behind an area of country systematically laid waste. Foiled here, the British forces planned to break through further north, but it was obviously time for the French to support them with a fresh offensive.

For the new effort a new man was needed, and the choice of the French War Office fell on General Nivelle, a commander who had done brilliant work under Joffre in the Battle of the Marne but found little opportunity to distinguish himself afterwards. The choice was approved by French public opinion, which was prepared to give him all the munitions and men he needed.

Though his offensive might call for heavy sacrifices, they would be gladly made if the new com-

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mander could finish the war with one dramatic blow, as he seemed likely to do. *Vive Nivelle!*

In full possession of his nation's confidence, Nivelle initiated his disastrous Champagne Offensive, which broke down in the first twenty four hours. The French losses were appalling, though whether Nivelle's plans were mad or the conceptions of a genius, botched by incompetent subordinates, is a point we must leave to the strategists to decide. Suffice it to say that Nivelle's failure and subsequent resignation were a moral as well as a material disaster to the French nation.

The spirit of the troops was badly shaken. They had advanced full of confidence into what they believed to be the last battle of the war, and in the bitterness of defeat a wave of revulsion swept over them. Were they always to be sacrificed, men asked one another, to demonstrate the inanities of some general who sat safely behind the firing-line and played with their lives like the pawns on a chess-board?

A regiment ordered into a dangerous sector of the Argonne mutinied and refused to advance. Others followed suit; ringleaders were chosen and a council of war took place. The Boche was not the real enemy, it was decided, but the imbeciles composing the Government in Paris, who poured out men's lives like water. To Paris, then, where we may hang them to the lamp-posts and choose a Government that really represents us. Let us appoint Workmen's and Soldiers' Councils like our Russian comrades; then if they decide to continue the war with the Boche, we will return to the trenches. But then, and only then; meanwhile, *vive la Revolution!*

They did not reach Paris. They were surrounded by loyal troops and disarmed. Their ring-leaders

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

were courtmartialled and shot; the rank and file returned, chastened, to their duty. But for some critical hours the front line of that sector was held by a handful of artillerymen and engineers who spread themselves along the length of the trenches and tried to pretend that they represented a whole division. If the Germans opposite them had heard of the mutiny, they could have walked out of their positions and captured the French front line, behind which lay their open road to Paris. But they had no spies in that sector to warn them of their opportunity, and so they took their ease while fresh troops were rushed to fill the gap and the road was closed.

Had the German Intelligence Service been aware of the open road, the German armies might have marched to Paris unhindered. The French *morale* was so badly shaken by the Nivelle fiasco that the fall of Paris would have brought about a national collapse, and Germany might have won the war.

Yet is it right to blame Intelligence for those three failures to take advantage of situations that offered so much to British, Italian and German commanders? After all, Intelligence agents can only go where they are sent, and it is the shadowy powers behind Intelligence's chiefs, who decide where the secret forces must go. If the British Government had ordered its Intelligence to plant an adequate staff of agents in Constantinople, Admiral de Roebeck would have received timely warning of the Turkish shortcomings in munitions and transport, so that he could have sailed on into the Bosphorus; if the Italians had maintained competent spies in Trieste, General Cadorna would have known that no Austrian army barred his way to the city; if the German Higher Command could have reckoned on information from the Argonne sector, their troops would have marched to Paris.

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It might have been, if . . .

And yet, who knows? Perhaps Intelligence did discover these chances of victory, only to be ignored by the men who could have used them.

Perhaps the reports dealing with them—reports that sounded so incredible and yet proved so true—lie docketed in three offices somewhere in London, Rome and Berlin.

Great is the Power of Red Tape, before which even Intelligence must bow the knee.

CHAPTER XIII

AND STILL IT GOES ON

The task of Intelligence is never finished. As soon as one war is over, the secret agents prepare for the possibility of another. The ally of yesterday may be the foeman of to-morrow, so that his arsenals, dockyards, fortresses and aerodromes are objects of closer vigilance than those owned by the vanquished opponent, whose powers for mischief are limited for the time being.

Thus at the close of the recent war such towns as Constantinople and Damascus swarmed with agents employed by the Military Missions of the various Entente states to spy upon one another. From French sources it is asserted that General Franchet d'Espérey, Admiral Amet and the French High Commissioner were subjected to the strictest surveillance by their British colleagues. One French writer accuses the British Intelligence Service of having stolen important documents from the French Embassy in Constantinople by means of agents who took advantage of the explosion of a bomb in a Pera street—alleged to have been thrown by a Greek in British pay—to enter the Ambassador's study during the confusion and abstract some highly confidential papers. It is impossible to ascertain the true version of this affair, but it has been remarked in a previous chapter that in war-time belligerents watch the movements

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of their allies almost as keenly as those of their enemies. This is a game perfectly understood by all parties concerned, so that the righteous indignation of the French writer seems somewhat unnecessary, especially in view of the feverish activity of his country's Intelligence Service in Turkey and Syria at that period.

The same French sources inform us that the Sultan's palace in Constantinople swarmed with British agents during the period when the Allies occupied the Turkish capital. One of these spies is said to have been the Chief Eunuch of the royal harem, a statement which immediately conjures up romantic visions of intrigues with veiled beauties, stilettos gleaming in narrow streets and corpses in sacks fished up in the Bosphorus. But it is extremely doubtful whether the employment of such agents brought much profit to their paymasters, as their reports were generally unreliable and drawn up with a view to profit rather than accuracy.

That well-known writer, Compton Mackenzie, who served in the Dardanelles campaign as an Intelligence Officer, has published his experiences in a work entitled "Gallipoli Memories," which contains many amusing accounts of the tribulations of British agents placed in charge of Levantine subordinates whose main aim in life seems to have been to extract the maximum of cash for the minimum of work. His testimony is corroborated by a significant statement of Colonel Nicolai to the effect that it was not easy for the German Intelligence agents to adapt themselves to the Turkish conditions which were so completely strange to them.

The story of spy and counterspy in the Near East during the recent war would demand a whole (and a very large) volume to itself, written by someone whose

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whole life had been passed in that part of the world. Meanwhile, failing such a narrative, some of the details which Colonel Nicolai gives us make interesting reading, even though he ruthlessly destroys our romantic picture of the intrigues with the veiled beauties of the harem by a concise statement that Turkey was the only theatre of war where women played no part whatever in espionage. The Turkish men, he also states, were seldom employed actively by either side, practically all the agents being Greeks, Jews and Armenians. Of these the last-mentioned proved easily the best spies.

He tells us that Constantinople swarmed with Entente agents, whose work was rendered easier by the fact that the policing of the town was in the hands of two different bodies operating independently of one another. The police officials kept office hours punctiliously, at least as far as times of departure were concerned, and could never be persuaded to work overtime, however great the pressure of business. This dilatoriness, however, had its disadvantages for the spy who was unfortunate enough to be arrested, for he was thrown into a crowded and insanitary prison, where he might linger for months before being brought to trial. As a result more spies met their doom from typhus than from the firing-party.

The Entente also gained much information from the many Turkish officials in high places who were definitely anti-German in sentiment and maintained secret correspondence with British and French friends. The Turks were also highly successful in concealing the trend of affairs and public opinion in their own country from the Intelligence agents of their allies, although they were astoundingly well acquainted with the real situation in Germany and Austria. Another interesting statement emanating from Nicolai is that

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which tells us that the Turkish Intelligence Service pushed its tentacles deep into Central Asia, but the information gained from these far-flung agents was regarded as strictly Turkish property and never shared with the German Intelligence Service.

At the same time the conditions at the front were indescribable. In the Caucasian theatre of war they bordered on the comic opera, for there was a lively traffic in deserters, always the occasion for much bargaining in Eastern fashion, while whole battalions are known to have changed sides four or five times during the war, their principle being to attach themselves to the army which offered the best prospects of good food and regular pay.

We have, therefore, a picture of Intelligence operating under conditions that would baffle the best European brains, so that it seems extremely doubtful whether the Entente officials gained any substantial results from their post-war experiences with Near Eastern agents in Constantinople. On the other hand it seems probable that many Turks, Greeks, Jews and Armenians enriched themselves at the cost of the British, French and Italian taxpayers to an extent that made them genuinely sorry when the Allied occupation of Constantinople came to an end.

But the Intelligences of the Western Powers soon had work nearer home to occupy their energies, for the Treaty of Versailles created a new Europe, in which a number of small states rose phoenix-like from the ruins of the Austrian and Russian Empires. They will soon become factors in the game of the 'Balance of Power,' at which European diplomacy delights to play, and already their Intelligence Services are at work.

The largest of these new states is Poland, whose Intelligence Service has been organised by her ally,

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France, with special departments for counter-espionage, military, diplomatic and commercial affairs. Poland watches Germany from Posen, Czecho-Slovakia from Cracow, Lithuania from Wilna and Russia from Brest-Litowsk, while in Warsaw a central office directs the activities of these various branches. Colonel Nicolai is responsible for the statement that only recently a Polish consul in Berlin had to be recalled because he was found implicated in espionage.

For Intelligence work Poland possesses the great advantage that her territory is formed of provinces that were parts of the German, Russian or Austrian Empire before the war. She can, therefore, draw her agents from men and women who speak the languages of the neighbouring countries and are well acquainted with their manners and customs.

Czecho-Slovakia has also built up a good Intelligence Service, which employs as agents many former officers of the Czech Legion that rendered the Entente such good service during the war. Much use is also made of university students who embrace a commercial career on completion of their courses and travel in the neighbouring lands on apparently harmless missions. Czecho-Slovakia keeps a wary eye on Teutonic and Slavonic neighbours alike.

Lithuania, on the contrary, has only a small Intelligence Service, the energies of which are mainly employed against Poland. As befits nearer neighbours of Red Russia, the Intelligences of Finland, Latvia and Esthonia direct their eyes eastwards, where the Soviet Republic, the unknown factor in the new combinations, searches out the secrets of Western Europe far more efficiently than the former Empire of the Tsars could ever do.

The ceaseless activities of these new states cannot be neglected by Great Britain, even though they lie

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remote from the Island Kingdom and their names are hardly as yet familiar to the average Englishman. But somewhere in London due attention is being paid to them, and in 1920 the British Intelligence Service was compelled to ask for an increase of funds to pay for the extra work involved by the additional spheres of operation.

During the latter years of the war the Entente states pooled most of the information acquired by their various Intelligences, but when the final shot was fired on November 11th, 1918, the mutual bond snapped which had occasioned this procedure. The United States were the first to withdraw from the common cause, but the European members of the mighty coalition were not slow to see that their diverging interests rendered any further combination in Intelligence work impossible. Neither Italy nor the Jugoslavian kingdom from which the small pre-war Serbia had developed have now much desire to spend money on espionage directed against Germany nor even against the republic that embodies the nucleus of the once powerful Austro-Hungarian Empire, although as rivals for predominance in the Adriatic Sea each is keenly alive to the other's activities. Britain has her interests in many parts of the world to consider, especially where they come into conflict with the propaganda emanating from the Soviet Republic.

The energies of France, however, are still mainly directed against her eastern neighbour, in whose territories her agents utilise the crisis caused by the collapse of Germany's finances to gain new recruits. Owing to the depreciation of the mark many Germans found themselves in desperate straits at the end of the war and were glad to do anything for a living. A number enlisted in the French Foreign Legion, for

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which recruiting offices were actually opened on German soil, but the German police soon discovered that the French authorities were in the habit of weeding out from the applicants any who seemed likely to be of use for Intelligence work. These were conveniently found unsuitable for military service by the French doctors who examined them and after a short course in a spy school drafted to unoccupied Germany to ferret out information concerning the military forces that the Treaty of Versailles still permitted the vanquished to retain.

Other spies were recruited from the active members of the military body known as the Reichswehr.

Protests addressed to the French Military Headquarters at Mainz met with the usual denials, but the figures published by Colonel Nicolai show them to be well founded. In 1923, for instance, 293 persons were convicted of espionage, the majority of whom were German subjects. The foreign Power for whose benefit the espionage took place was generally France.

The methods employed to suborn members of the Reichswehr were simple. From Mainz, Strasbourg or Basel officers and N.C.O.'s received letters to the effect that a mutual friend had given the addressee's name to the writer as a suitable person for lucrative employment that would not interfere with his ordinary duties. He was invited to obtain leave and pay a visit to some locality in the occupied territory or on Swiss soil, where further particulars would be imparted, and a sum of money was enclosed for the expenses of his journey.

Some recipients of these letters merely pocketed the money and thought no more of the matter, but others went and were duly enrolled in the French Intelligence Service. As French agents had carefully reported on the characters of prospective recruits

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before they were approached, there was only a minimum risk of betrayal to the German police, who in any case were powerless to intervene against the recruiters so long as the latter took care not to venture into unoccupied Germany.

Counter-espionage, therefore, worked at a disadvantage, although an occasional lucky catch was made, as in the case of Captain D'Armout. It is said that this gentleman's undoing was the result of a mistake by a clerk in his office at Basel, who wrongly addressed a letter that ultimately fell into the hands of a German police commissioner. The latter impersonated the officer to whom the letter was addressed and after a couple of interviews with D'Armout, in the course of which he supplied the Frenchman with some choice tit-bits of information specially manufactured for foreign consumption, he created such an impression of confidence that he induced D'Armout to keep an appointment on the German side of the frontier.

The meeting took place in a field, not far from the border, and a squad of German police, disguised as agricultural labourers, were in waiting. At the last moment D'Armout appears to have smelt a rat and made a bolt for the frontier, but the policemen closed in on him, and after a terrific struggle he was overpowered when only a couple of yards from the frontier.

The sentence of twelve years imprisonment he received seems to have been unnecessarily severe, but after some negotiations with the French authorities he was released when he had served about eighteen months of it and conveyed out of Germany with the warning that he would be liable to re-arrest if ever he set foot on German soil again.

Not so lucky was Vivian Stranders, formerly a captain in the British army and after the armistice a member of the Inter-allied Military Mission that

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toured Germany to see that the disarmament clauses of the Treaty of Versailles were properly observed. It is said that when his duties with this body came to an end he was persuaded to enter the German Intelligence Service on the condition that he should not be employed against his own country. Stranders was convicted of espionage in France, and is still in prison. The case was largely reported in the British press, but it is not quite clear whether he was really working for Germany or merely alleged to be doing so because it was considered undesirable to admit that he was in British service. The latter alternative is quite feasible in view of the following incident, which caused a large stir in the French press.

It concerns three other Britons, working in their own Intelligence Service, who were likewise apprehended by the French police on a similar charge. The tale of their escape is worth the telling.

The names under which they were known in Paris were Leather, Philips and Fisher, and between them they managed a shop that sold wireless accessories. With them was associated a young lady of prepossessing appearance and artistic aspirations, Mlle. Marthe Moreuil.

Her troubles began when she came in conflict with her parents, who were of a puritanical disposition. Her father, a petty official in a small provincial town, ruled his family with a rod of iron, and consequently found his daughter's craving for the pomps and vanities of this world a sharp thorn in his flesh. He took no pains to conceal his displeasure, so that by the time she reached her fifteenth year Marthe came to the conclusion that the joys of domestic life were overrated and resolved to tear herself away from them at the earliest possible moment.

Aware of the scope of parental authority, she laid

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her plans cunningly. For several months she simulated a fervid interest in religion, attended mass daily and finally informed her parents that she felt a call for the vocation of a nun.

Overjoyed at this change in her outlook, Moreuil was easily persuaded to send her to a convent school to receive proper instruction until she was old enough to take her vows, but her sojourn in this establishment lasted barely a week, at the end of which period Marthe found an opportunity to escape the vigilance of her teachers and took the train to Paris. From the 'City of Light' she sent a postcard to her parents, announcing her intention to become an artist.

Her good looks procured her employment as a model, and she found the painters to whom she sat to be very sympathetic people. The idea of her heavy father arriving, armed with the force of law, to hail his truant daughter back to school tickled their sense of humour, and when he reached Paris in search of the fugitive, she was nowhere to be found.

Moreuil washed his hands of the sinner and went back to his home in the provinces, but his daughter was of such an affectionate temperament that she did not feel inclined to leave the kind protectors who sheltered her in her need. Her clinging disposition did not suit the artists, who had painted her in every conceivable pose and found their means inadequate to support a model whom they could no longer use. Marthe was forced to seek employment elsewhere, and after trying her hand at several jobs, reached the end of her financial resources. Then a kindly Providence brought her into touch with a certain William Fisher.

She met this elderly gentleman in a café, and as she found him sympathetic, she poured forth all her troubles. Mr. Fisher listened attentively and agreed

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that such a gifted young lady ought to have the chance to satisfy her artistic aspirations. He fancied he saw an opening, and made an appointment for her to meet his partners, Messrs. Leather and Philips.

The three Englishmen kept a shop for wireless accessories in the rue de Surène, but Marthe soon learnt that they were interested in another invention of twentieth century science, for they appeared to be familiar with many different types of aeroplanes and knew the locality of every aerodrome in France. They deplored the number of casualties in aviation, most of which, they pointed out, could have been avoided by the use of parachutes.

One of their friends, it appeared, had invented such a beneficial appliance, which he was anxious to put on the French market, but so far he had failed to advertise it effectively. If, however, a charming young lady, such as Mlle. Moreuil undoubtedly was, would consent to give demonstrations of the powers of this parachute by leaping from an aeroplane in mid-air and alighting gracefully on *terra firma*, she would be certain to draw proper attention to its merits. At the same time she would achieve a reputation as an artist.

There was positively no danger, they assured her, and her services would be remunerated by an adequate salary. Marthe consented to test the parachute's efficacy.

At first she was frightened; on her initial flight she found considerable difficulty in nerving herself for the leap. But finally her vanity triumphed over her fears; she took the plunge, and, as the Englishmen predicted, she reached the ground unhurt. As a matter of fact the parachute was one of the latest English models, and her risks were practically nil.

Marthe practised the leap and soon came to enjoy

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the sensation of gliding through the air. Then followed the first public demonstration, which was witnessed by a large crowd, and the applause that greeted her feat was balm to her soul. She realised that she was at last on the highroad to fame.

Messrs. Leather, Philips and Fisher appear to have given quite a number of demonstrations before they took their pupil into their full confidence, but one day they made the suggestion that she should undertake a tour round France, whereby her salary would be largely increased if she would consent to do certain other things besides alighting gracefully with the aid of her parachute, an art at which she was now thoroughly proficient. Marthe enquired the nature of these additional duties and, as the partners expected, showed no scruples at undertaking them when they were explained to her. Intelligence agents are usually good judges of character, who learn to gauge to a nicety how far they can trust their confederates, and in their estimate of Mlle. Moreuil they were not mistaken.

She was, in fact, thrilled by the idea of becoming a spy, and soon proved an apt pupil. The partners obtained permission for her to give demonstrations of her parachute at various military aerodromes, where, as they suspected, the gallant aviators were ready to lionise the pretty girl.

Wherever she demonstrated, the officers entertained her; her ingenuous questions about the nature and strength of their squadrons received correct answers instead of the sharp snubs that would have been meted out to enquiries from members of their own sex. The fair Marthe also found opportunities to pry into office desks, from which she abstracted interesting documents, and her employers supplied her with a small but efficient camera, which she could

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conceal in her costume. While floating in the air, she took photographs of the aerodromes she visited.

In like fashion she also photographed the naval docks at Bordeaux and St. Nazaire; at St. Raphael she secured pictures of the latest type of flying-boat. The three partners remained in Paris, but corresponded with her, giving their instructions concerning the espionage part of the business in a new brand of invisible ink, which subsequently the French chemists found impossible to detect without the aid of the special revealing agent supplied by its inventors.

But Marthe's career came to an untimely end through her vanity. She was foolish enough to give a hint of her real profession to an individual named Wiet, the degenerate son of a French consul at Genoa, who was disowned by his parents and earned a precarious living by his wits. This Wiet was arrested for participation in several shady transactions and denounced the fair parachutist to the police in the hope of securing a milder sentence.

When arrested and questioned, she made a clean breast and put the whole blame on her employers, who were likewise apprehended. In her luggage was found a supply of the invisible ink and its revealing agent, together with a number of documents she had filched from the military and naval establishments she visited.

The affair caused much sensation in Paris, where the press was loud in its denunciation of British perfidy. Public opinion was outraged at the idea of France's late ally sending over spies to ferret out her secrets and did not stop to reflect that the French authorities did precisely the same thing when an opportunity occurred. Meanwhile Mlle. Moreuil enjoyed the notoriety of her situation and looked forward to the visits paid her by the police officials in charge

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of the case. She appeared totally unconcerned at the prospect of the long term of imprisonment which they hinted to be in store for her.

But these prospects never came to fulfilment. The British ambassador issued the usual statement that Messrs. Leather, Philips and Fisher were not employed in any official capacity and had acted on their own responsibility, but French counterspies in London claimed to have traced their connection with the British Intelligence Service. A statement to this effect appeared in the press and fanned public opinion to such an alarming extent that the French Government foresaw the likelihood of the affair damaging their friendly relations with Great Britain. In the interests of both countries it was decided to hush the case up, because it was far too painful to permit the publicity of a trail.

On a hint from the authorities the press issued a statement that excess of zeal on the part of the police and Mlle. Moreuil's hysterical craving for notoriety had combined to lead the public to certain deductions, which subsequent investigation showed to be incorrect. The whole business was, in short, a mare's-nest.

Marthe Moreuil was released from prison and handed over to her parents, while Leather, Philips and Fisher were escorted to the coast and put on board the next steamer bound for England. For them the scandal was an unexpected piece of good luck, for they had been caught under circumstances which rendered their guilt obvious, and according to the rules of the game their penalty was a long term of imprisonment, which they were prepared to endure.

They were far more fortunate than the French agent arrested last year in the vicinity of a British

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naval base and charged under the Official Secrets Act. His case was viewed with indifference by both the press and the public, with the result that he was duly tried and convicted, receiving, however, a comparatively mild sentence.

CHAPTER XIV

IN THE RED LAND.

There was once a Communist who repented of his Communism. He held high rank in his party ; he was the founder of the Young Communist League in his country ; he was such a valuable asset to the cause that one day he was chosen to go as a delegate to Moscow. He went with enthusiasm ; he returned disillusioned and full of anxiety concerning the Red Peril that threatened Europe.

What he saw in Moscow convinced him that the rulers of the Kremlin have little sympathy with the workers of other lands. For them the proletariat is a mere instrument to serve their purposes, a means to their end, which is to impose the domination of Moscow on the whole world. If the working-man of Western Europe suffered on their behalf, they did not care as long as their cause triumphed.

This was the discovery made by our Communist, whom we will call X, but he kept a cool head during his sojourn in Moscow, which was just as well for him. Otherwise he might have been the victim of a regrettable accident or even have mysteriously disappeared, as others are alleged to have done when the strength of their allegiance was found wanting, for Moscow has a short way with backsliders. But his loyalty remained unsuspected, and he was therefore permitted to view the machinery of the Soviet's

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Intelligence Service and learn some of the plans formulated by Moscow for her conquest of the world.

Spying is second nature to the average Russian, because he has lived in a network of espionage for many generations. The British mind has but a dim conception of the state of affairs in Tsarist Russia, where the Okhrana (Secret Political Police) spied on the daily business of even the most insignificant citizen of the Russian Empire. Political personages, the nobility and the members of the Imperial Family were the objects of a special supervision that surveyed every moment of their waking and sleeping hours, while a daily report of their most trivial actions was lodged with the chief of the political police.

To enter into a casual conversation with a suspected person was an offence that might entail the most serious consequences and, perhaps, culminate in banishment to Siberia. This rigorous supervision the Tsarist Government also extended to those of its subjects who travelled abroad, as the following incident will show.

A petty government official holding a minor post in a small town in the Ukraine once took a holiday in Switzerland. Prior to this trip his life was uneventful and he never came into conflict with the authorities, but on his return to his native town he found himself an object of suspicion, subject to constant visitations from the police, with all their attendant inconveniences. He wondered what offence he had committed, but could think of none. His record was clear, his official career was marred by no incidents, but he knew that he was liable to instant arrest, with the dismal prospect of life-long banishment to some Siberian waste.

He was luckier than many others, for he was left at liberty, and by a curious train of circumstances he subsequently ascertained the cause of his fall from

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grace. During his stay in Switzerland he spent several weeks in Zürich and one day took a walk on the Uetliberg, a wooded hill overlooking the town which commands a fine view of the distant snow-peaks. In the course of this ramble he chanced to meet another Russian, a man with whom he had exchanged a few words in a Zürich café and, as is perfectly natural for compatriots in a strange land, he fell into conversation with him. The two men walked to the top of the Uetliberg together, admired the view, partook of some refreshment and returned to the town, where they parted. About a week later they again chanced to meet in a café, where once more they exchanged a few words. But these three casual meetings were sufficient to put the man from the Ukraine in the black books of his local police.

Unknown to him, his chance acquaintance was a dangerous revolutionary, whom the agents of the Okhrana were shadowing closely. All who kept company with him incurred suspicion, and although on the three occasions he only chatted trivialities with the man from the Ukraine (a circumspect person, always reticent with strangers), the report sent in by the watchers sufficed to implicate the latter and damn his future career. He was indeed fortunate that no worse befell him.

More than one impartial observer who has enjoyed the experience of a visit to Soviet Russia has asserted that the underground conflict between the revolutionaries of Tsarist days and the Okhrana has left an indelible mark on Soviet politics. Every Russian revolutionary was in constant danger of arrest, for his own party was honeycombed with police spies, ever on the alert for an opportunity to provoke him to some action that might justify his arrest. Such an *agent-provocateur* was Father Gapon, the priest who

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led the crowd of workmen to petition the Tsar for a new constitution on the Red Sunday of February, 1905. His duped followers were ruthlessly sabred by the Cossacks who lay in wait for them, and the rule of the Tsar became more autocratic than ever.

For a long time Father Gapon's complicity was unsuspected by the partisans of the cause he had betrayed, but one day his body was found suspended from the rafters of a room in an empty house, and on a table nearby was a scrap of paper, announcing that execution had been done on a traitor.

The *coup d' état* of October, 1917, finally delivered the destinies of Russia to the Bolshevists, into whose hands fell the archives of the Tsar's political police. On the occasion of his visit to Russia the repentant communist X, was permitted to inspect the offices where they are housed at Leningrad. All the dossiers of the agents employed by the Okhrana have been kept intact, and by examining one of them at random, the visitor was able to trace step by step the career of a police spy.

The individual in question began as an informer, receiving for his services five roubles a week, but did his work so intelligently that a footnote appended by one of his superiors suggested that his services could be used to better advantage if he entered the revolutionary ranks.

Accordingly in 1910, the dossier recorded that he had joined the Social-Democratic Party and made his mark as a promising member of the Left Wing. His salary from the police was now 100 roubles per month. The next note said that he was to stand as a candidate for the Duma, as he had supplied information that led to the arrest of four revolutionaries, one of whom was no less a person than Stalin.

In 1912 he was elected and became noted at the

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sessions for the violence of his revolutionary sentiments. His reward was a large increase of salary. A couple of years later he held official position in the party, with another increase of salary from the police. There followed a list of the persons he had denounced. The dossier was written up to the outbreak of the Revolution in March, 1917, in which the subject played a prominent part. Then the record was silent.

By such means the Okhrana kept in touch with the plots of the revolutionaries, and whenever their chiefs deemed it necessary, the secret agents provoked an outbreak which could be suppressed. The obvious method of retaliation was for the revolutionaries to plant their own spies in the ranks of the political police, with the result that a revolutionary counter-espionage service came into existence and accumulated information to enable it to defeat the efforts of the wildest *agent-provocateur*. The Revolutionary party also kept agents in other countries to spy upon the activities of the Okhrana abroad, give assistance to refugees who escaped from Russia or Siberia and furnish them with the means to re-enter Russia in disguise. Many of these were comrades of the Left Wing in their own lands, but others had little sympathy with the cause they served for their own financial gain. Such helpers of the Revolution were to be found in all walks of life.

Chance brought the writer into contact with one of them. This 'A.M.' was a stout elderly man in the fifties, who for many years was a member of the theatrical profession. He generally played 'heavies' or 'robust comedy' parts with moderate ability in theatrical companies that toured the smaller towns of the United Kingdom; sometimes he obtained an engagement in what is known as a 'No 1' company, and visited larger towns such as Manchester, Birm-

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ingham or Glasgow, but he seldom had a London engagement. He was often out of work for long periods, and his colleagues did not know what he did with himself at such times, although he was vaguely supposed to have a home somewhere in Wales. He was a man who kept himself to himself, but he was known in the theatrical profession as a somewhat eccentric individual with a curious temperament that sometimes prompted him to throw up a well-paid engagement for a trivial cause and thus condemn himself to several months of inaction that would have meant starvation to other actors of his standing.

But 'A.M.' always had money. On tour he lived well, though not luxuriously, and he was never embarrassed by any failure of the company's manager to pay the weekly salaries. Obviously he did not depend on his theatrical earnings for a livelihood.

His name, if given, would convey nothing to the British theatre-going public, but in the years before the war it signified much to the Imperial Russian Government, for there was a price of several thousand pounds on his head. Could he have been kidnapped and smuggled into Russia, a Siberian dungeon was the mildest punishment awaiting him. 'A.M.' was, in fact, the chief of an organisation for providing Russian revolutionaries with false passports and smuggling them back to Russia. His headquarters were at Cardiff, where he had established a network of connections with ships that did business with Russian ports, and his disguise of a touring actor must have been very convenient to him, because his constant change of address made it extremely difficult for the Okhrana's agents in England to keep an eye on his movements.

The Russian system of espionage produced many

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examples of the 'double spy,' who took payment from both parties and betrayed their secrets impartially. A double spy's life is the acme of insecurity, for he has to be continually on the alert for detection by members of either side. Though the financial gain tempted many to double espionage, few survived to enjoy its rewards. One of the most daring double spies was the notorious Azeff, who was deep in the confidences of the revolutionaries while earning a large salary as one of the Okhrana's trustiest agents. For some years he balanced one party off against another, and in his capacity of *agent-provocateur* played a large part in fomenting the demonstrations that led to the Red Sunday massacres of February, 1905. But a few years later he was found dead in a hotel in Frankfurt a/M under mysterious circumstances. His assassin had disappeared without leaving a clue, so that it will never be known whether it was the Okhrana or the revolutionaries who took vengeance on the traitor.

It can easily be understood that the men who had grown old in this conflict of spy and counterspy were so impregnated with spirit of espionage that when they came to power they found it impossible to relinquish the habits that had become second nature to them. Hence the formation of the terrible Tcheka.

The Okhrana, as we have noted, had its agents in the Imperial Palace, in the cabinets of the ministers, in the foreign embassies and in every government office. When, therefore, its archives fell into the hands of the Bolsheviks in 1917, they decided to make use of them.

With the system they took over the men that worked it, for most of the Okhrana's agents were willing to take service in the new political police organisation known as the Tcheka* Their duties remained the

* The expression 'Tcheka' is an abbreviation of 'Tcherzvytchaika,' which signifies 'Extraordinary Commission.'

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same though their masters had changed. As in former days they had furnished reports on the behaviour of any individual suspected of complicity in a plot against the Tsar, so henceforth they were detailed to shadow the movements of counter-revolutionaries aiming at the overthrow of the Soviet Government, and in their zeal to serve their new masters they watched the actions of the most trusted 'comrades' with the same diligence that they formerly devoted to the functionaries of the Empire.

The Tcheka was overhauled and reorganised by Djerjinski, one of the most efficient of the Soviet leaders. Formerly the Russian Intelligence Service had been an organisation completely independent of the political police, but the ruler of the Tcheka decided that the changed circumstances rendered it necessary for him to have complete control of the agents that spied on foreign governments as well as those who surveyed the internal affairs of the land. Two new sections were therefore added to the Tcheka, the C.R.O. (Counterespionage Section) and the I.N.O. (Foreign Affairs Section). As in the case of the Okhrana, the greater part of the personnel of the former Intelligence Service were taken over. From Djerjinski's point of view the system worked well, but the word 'Tcheka' became so odious to Russians of all views that the organisation had to have a new name. It is now the G.P.U.*

The powers of this political police are far-reaching, and its myriad eyes search out every hidden corner, a fact which can be confirmed by a certain American gentleman who was a member of one of the Relief Commissions sent over from the United States to

* In some works on Russia erroneously termed the OGPU. The G.P.U. is an abbreviation of the three Russian words *Gossoudarstvennoie Politicheskoe Oupravlenie*, which signifies 'Political Direction of the State.'

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supply food to the starving population of Russia in the years immediately following the war.

Before he crossed the Atlantic he was warned of the danger of committing any act or speaking any word that might bring him under suspicion of meddling with the internal politics of Russia and made a vow to observe the strictest precautions during his sojourn in the Red Land. On his way thither he passed several weeks in London, where he had introductions to several important personages. A few days before he sailed he received an invitation to dine with the late Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace, and saw no reason why he should not accept, especially as Dr. Davidson was interested in the work of the Relief Commission. But when he ultimately reached Moscow, he wondered whether he would not have been wiser to decline, for the police summoned him to a special interview, and for several hours he was questioned about his dinner at Lambeth Palace.

The police also mentioned the names of other persons whom he met in London, so that he soon realised he had been shadowed from the day he first set foot on British soil. His dinner with Dr. Davidson was taken very seriously by the rulers of Moscow, and for several weeks it was doubtful whether he would be allowed to remain in Russia.

Eventually he received the benefit of the doubt, but it was not long before he fell from grace once more. From his own Baptist Church in America he had received instructions to ascertain how the Russian Baptists were faring and endeavour to ensure them receiving a share of the foodstuffs sent from the United States. But when he settled down to his work, he did not take long to discover that the Soviet authorities had their own ideas about the distribution of supplies and would bitterly resent any attempt to give special succour

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to members of a religious community. He nevertheless determined to carry out his orders and give any help that could be given without actually transgressing Soviet regulations.

His main difficulty was that he had no knowledge of the localities where these Baptist communities resided, and as he was ignorant of the Russian language, he was dependent for his information on the good offices of Russians working with the members of the Relief Commission. Through one of them he learnt that a certain Countess Tolstoi, a distant connection of the celebrated writer, could put him in touch with several Baptist leaders and thought there would be no harm in asking her, as she was interested in the Relief Commission. One night he attended a reception at her house, together with some other Americans, and the Countess gave him the information he required in a little room she used as an office. No one else was present when she spoke to him, no one but a few intimate friends and his fellow-workers were in the house at the time.

Nevertheless a policeman called the following day, just as he was sitting down to lunch, and summoned him to appear before the representatives of the Tcheka without delay. Great was his amazement when the officials in charge of the case laid before him a verbatim report of the conversation with the Countess Tolstoi, which he imagined to have taken place under conditions of strictest privacy. He spent another unpleasant couple of hours under cross-examination, and for the rest of his stay in Russia he was a marked man, unable to move a yard without police spies dogging his steps. Only strict unswerving attention to the mechanical routine of business saved him from further unpleasantness.

From the above it will be seen that Soviet Russia

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has nothing to learn from the former *regime* in the matter of espionage on citizens and strangers. The G.P.U. has the majority of the Okhrana's agents in its service, reinforced with a host of newcomers of divers races and nationalities, for all of whom membership of the Communist Party is compulsory. The executive power is concentrated in the hands of its president, Menjinski, who took office after Djerjinski's death, and under him is a board of twelve directors. There are branches in every town in Russia.

The G.P.U. has its own army, with shock troops, tanks, gas and aviation corps, all ready to proceed anywhere within the boundaries of Russia at a moment's notice. The Moscow militia is also at Menjinski's disposal, while the postal, telegraph and telephone services are under his immediate control. As in Tsarist Russia, the press is under strict censorship.

The headquarters of the G.P.U. comprise practically the whole of the Lubyanka quarter of Moscow, where it has its own courts of justice and prison houses, the latter, however, being merely receiving depots, where political offenders sentenced to imprisonment or banishment are collected. Thence they are transported to the distributing centres of the northern and eastern regions such as Murmansk and Tobolsk, to be further expedited to their places of exile.

Many have committed no offence; an incautious word or even the private spite of a G.P.U. agent suffices for an arrest, and the victim disappears to the trackless wastes of Siberia, where cold, disease and malnutrition will do their work. It is said that in the political prison of Solowki, situated on an island in the White Sea which is ice-bound for eight months of the twelve, an average of 3,000 political prisoners die yearly. But these figures cannot be checked, because the G.P.U. keeps no register of its victims.

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It is obvious that a government devoting so much energy to the supervision of private individuals cannot lack the will or the means to spy upon the affairs of other countries, for information must be procured and stored against the day when the war upon Capitalism will be waged with rifle and artillery instead of propaganda. During his sojourn in Russia the repentant Communist, X, mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, had an opportunity to visit No. 2, Lubianka, where the Sections of Foreign Affairs and Counter-espionage have their headquarters. The entire third floor of this building is given over to their offices, in which a staff of some forty experts is employed to examine and file the various documents.

One of the most interesting rooms is No. 161. where the reports forwarded by residential agents abroad receive their preliminary examination and classification before being passed on to the special departments dealing with military, naval, political, financial, geographical matters, etc. These departments have their own sub-divisions; the military department, for example, is separated into two sections, one of which is occupied with the information received from espionage on the armies of foreign powers, while the other handles the reports about their armament contractors and arsenals.

The first branch collects statistics of the numbers and types of soldiers employed by the various states, with special notes on their *morale*, and the characters and characteristics of the generals commanding them. Whenever possible, dossiers of all officers of high rank are compiled, showing the length of their service, their political views, their financial and domestic affairs, and innumerable other details. Every promotion or change of circumstances is faithfully recorded.

The second sub-division of the Military Department

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deals with the output of the arsenals in all countries. There are statistics of the numbers and types of artillery, tanks, aeroplanes and small arms in use, with copious information about the supplies of raw materials needed to manufacture these instruments of war. Maps show the networks of strategic roads and railways, while plans of fortresses and fortified camps, bought or stolen by the Soviet's secret agents, show the obstacles that an invading army must be prepared to encounter. All these documents are carefully examined and checked by a special staff of engineer and artillery officers, aided by a host of competent draughtsmen.

Then come the secret formulas for explosives and gasses. As soon as they are classified, they are taken to the G.P.U.'s laboratories to be tested. There they pass into the hands of research chemists, who are ready to work day and night on incomplete formulas, sparing neither time nor money until at last the full secret of some explosive is reconstructed from the imperfect details supplied.

The work of No. 161 never ceases. Almost hourly fresh documents arrive, to be thrown in apparent confusion into the drawers of huge chests. Maps, plans and charts are piled pell-mell on a draughtsman's table.

When a drawer is full, the sorters empty it, examine its contents and despatch them to the proper departments. A new bridge over a German river is marked on a map, the latest promotion of a Spanish colonel is recorded, the statistics of a Birmingham small-arms factory are checked and a strike in a Chicago steel plant receives due attention. And so the work goes on.

It is difficult for a stranger to gain access to 'Room No. 161,' but the secrets of 'Room No. 184' are

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yet more carefully guarded. Nevertheless X was able to indulge in a peep, for one day, after he had been in Moscow for several months, a Tchekist official came to his hotel and bade him accompany him without delay. He was taken to 'Room No. 184,' where his presence was awaited by a committee of five, who sat silently smoking the usual Russian cigarettes with cardboard mouthpieces. At a desk, with her back turned towards him, sat a shorthand typist, who was charged with the task of taking down his evidence.

The matter under discussion was the wickedness of a certain gentleman in his own country, who had been entrusted with the work of overseeing the activities of the Communist associations there, but had bolted after embezzling certain funds in his charge. His depredations were hushed up, for the Soviet authorities prefer to suffer in silence rather than court the undesirable publicity occasioned by proclaiming the peccadilloes of dishonest agents, but the committee in charge of the case were anxious to have evidence from X.

By a merest chance this committee was sitting in 'Room No. 184,' as the scene of its usual labours was occupied by other pressing business, and while X answered their questions, his eyes were busy taking in the details of the room about which he had heard so much. He saw that its four walls were so closely hung with maps and charts that scarcely a vacant inch of space remained. On the folding doors that gave access to it were affixed tables of names and figures to serve as guides to any legitimate seeker after the information the walls contained. Then his interest was attracted by a map of Europe, about six feet square, on which he observed that the principal towns of every country were marked with black

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flags, which were affixed by pins and imprinted with a series of white numerals.

Sometimes these flags bore red crosses or shields on their surfaces in addition to the numbers, and several of the largest towns contained two or even three flags. To each flag was attached a ribbon of thin red silk, stretching to the edge of the map and then pursuing its way along the wall until it entered the large scale map of some particular country, which likewise bristled with flags, at one of which it found its terminus.

Following the course of one of these red lines at random, X noted that it reached its destination in a map of France, which he then scrutinised as closely as he could.

He contrived to notice that around the coastlines were a number of pale green flags, while those dotted along the lines of the land frontiers were mainly blue. In the interior of the land were other flags of divers colours, and when his eyes came to distinguish the various towns, etc., he noticed that all the fortified centres, such as Toul, Verdun and Metz, had as many as five flags of different colours. A rough calculation enabled him to estimate that this map of France contained at least a thousand flags.

He then saw that the maps of Great Britain and Belgium bristled generously with flags, although Italy had comparatively few. In the maps of the British Dominions and the United States the populated areas were thick with flags. Red ribbons crossed and recrossed one another as they pursued their ways across seas and frontiers, joining flag to flag until some of the maps resembled vast spiders' webs.

When his interrogators signified that the interview was terminated, X contrived to scrutinise unob-

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trusively some of the cupboards and shelves with which the room was furnished. He saw that their drawers and pigeonholes were marked with numbers corresponding to those on the little flags, and deduced that they contained the information sent in by the agents resident in the towns they represented.

X needed no clerk to explain to him that he was gazing on the vast network of espionage that the rulers of the Red Land have flung across the world in the few years of their power.

CHAPTER XV

RED CELLS

It is interesting to note the methods by which the Soviet Government procures the information that finds its way to 'Rooms 161 and 184' of the Lubyanka. In addition to the usual staff of Intelligence agents she employs for service abroad, Russia can rely on a host of allies to aid their researches in every land.

These are the local Communist organisations, and when 'the day' comes, Russia will call upon them to assist her from the rear by blowing up bridges, promoting strikes in munition factories and fomenting mutinies in the military and naval forces. Meanwhile the more active members of these bodies are agitators who stir up disaffection against the civil authorities on every possible occasion and spies who help to furnish the thousands of reports for the Lubyanka. The rank and file engage in extensive propaganda for Communism.

In this country the principal organisation is the Communist Party of Great Britain, which is the British section of the Third International. There are, however, others that do not advertise their politics quite so conspicuously by their titles, such as the National Minority Movement, the National Unemployed Workers' Movement, the Workers' International Relief, the Labour Research Department (which sounds quite harmless, but is controlled by

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members of the Communist Party of Great Britain), the Workers' Defence Force and Modern Books, Limited, a title which might suggest an interest in good literature but ably conceals a cunning system of Communistic propaganda. The Labour Monthly would seem at first sight to be an organ in support of the Parliamentary Labour Party, of which it is a sworn enemy, but the Friends of Soviet Russia and the International Class War Prisoners' Aid (the British section of the International Red Aid) proclaim their objectives more openly, while the Meerut Defence Committee is a grim warning of Russia's activities in India.

Red Russia believes in training her potential allies from their early youth upward, as may be deduced from the Young Communist Associations and Scouts that are found in every European land. Their headquarters are in London, where they are directed by a certain John Wilson, whose name figured largely in connection with the Arcos affair.

Communist Scouts are divided into three classes. The first, known as the Cadets, contains children from the ages of seven to twelve, under the leadership of an older boy or girl, while the second grade takes them from twelve to sixteen, at which age the adolescent desirous of remaining in the movement passes into the third class, known as the Ancients. In each class the members are sub-divided into groups of six under their own leader. Special attention is given to promising comrades likely to prove suitable for responsible posts on reaching an age of maturity.

The children are thus impregnated with the idea of class warfare. They are taught that in the world there are two classes of children, the progeny of the proletariat and the bourgeois, between whom there must always be war to the knife.

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The Communist scout has an oath of fidelity, which he takes at the age of twelve, and a constitution that is a travesty of that drawn up by Lord Baden-Powell for the Boy Scouts. Like the latter, he is taught to be ready to serve mankind and be a brother to all scouts, but the ideas of service and fraternity differ considerably from those of the Boy Scouts. On the banner of the Communist Scout is blazoned the hammer and the sickle that are the emblems of the Russian flag, and although he ignores the National Anthem, he must rise to attention when the strains of the International are heard.

When the young communist reaches manhood and goes to work in a factory, he will, if approved, be drafted into one of the numerous cells that honeycomb modern industry. A cell is a group of three or four trusted communists working in the same establishment, whose task it is to pave the way for propaganda among their fellows. They also collect the information required by No. 2, Lubianka.

They are instructed to join the Trade Union to which the workmen in their factory belong and attend all local meetings of its branch. On suitable occasions they distribute the tracts, leaflets and newspapers supplied to them by headquarters. Their Intelligence work consists in drawing up lists of all factories within their sphere of action and furnishing information required for the spread of Communist propaganda.

The following is a typical questionnaire to be filled in by members of the cells :

- (1) Name and address of factory.
- (2) Numbers of persons employed in (A) Male Occupations, (B) Female Occupations, (C) Juvenile Occupations.
- (3) The nature of the work on which each of the above categories is employed.

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- (4) Hours for commencing and finishing work.
- (5) How many workers are Trade Unionists ?
- (6) To what Union or Unions do they belong ?
- (7) Give a list of walls, hoardings, etc., to which propagandist bills or posters may be advantageously affixed.
- (8) Give a list of large rooms and halls in the district that could be used for meetings, with terms and conditions of hire, exact locality and seating capacity.

All this information reaches Moscow via the heads of local Communist Associations or travelling agents of the Russian Intelligence Service and is filed in the Lubyanka. Meanwhile the cell strives incessantly to infect the workmen of its factory with Communist ideas so that when Moscow decrees a strike every preparation may be made to ensure its success. In large factories there are often several cells, and one of their members is often nominated as a 'correspondent' (Rabcor). It is then his duty to keep Moscow informed by regular reports of every noteworthy event in the establishment; the post carries a small salary attached to it, and is thus an excellent method of stimulating the zeal of some promising comrade who may be marked out for further promotion. In factories engaged on government work such correspondents are chosen, whenever possible, from among the more skilled men, whose technical ability enables them to give accurate descriptions of the work on which they are employed. In 1928 the correspondents of French factories at Firminy and Saint Tropez, supplied Moscow with full details of a new gyroscopic apparatus for steering torpedoes, while from a laboratory in the same country the Soviet's Rabcor sent a formula of the latest kind of poison gas.

It will be unpleasant news for British readers to

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learn that London is to be made the European centre for Communist propaganda in industrial affairs. In February last the Executive Committee of the Comintern (Communist International) discussed the relative advantages of London, Paris and Berlin as headquarters and came to the conclusion that the police in the two latter cities were growing somewhat too intolerant and that London would be the safest place at present. Meanwhile the Communist Party of Great Britain and all kindred bodies have received orders to 'organise the workers for violent assaults on the authorities of Great Britain, the world centre of Imperialism.' The masses, these orders emphasise, can only obtain control by violently overthrowing the bourgeois authority, the capitalist State machine, the army, the police, the bureaucratic hierarchy, the Courts of Justice and Parliament. For such aims much fruitful propaganda can be carried on in the factories, for when the time comes to move openly, the first tactics to be employed will take the form of another General Strike.

The same methods are employed on the other side of the Atlantic, for Mr. Grover Whalen, the Commissioner of Police for New York, has published a series of documents proving the recent strikes and unemployment riots in America to have been caused by residential agents of the Soviet. These incriminating papers were obtained by the efforts of his counter-espionage staff known as the 'under cover men.'

Some of their information was secured from officials of the American Federation of Labour, while several documents were voluntarily handed over by Mr. J. Lovestone, the leader of a Communist group that split off from the official party and is now violently hostile to Moscow. The Amtorg (Soviet Trade Organisation for America) is implicated as the principal

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letterbox for industrial and commercial espionage in America, as one letter that was captured contains instructions to Saul Bron, the former head of this body, to "turn over all the funds in your possession to 'Comrade Lisa' for the enforcement of the Proletariat front" and directs how the money should be used to foment strikes and subsidise Communist propaganda. The Soviet followed the customary procedure in use for the diplomatic representatives of any country whose agents have been detected in espionage, for M. Skvirski, the unofficial Russian ambassador to the United States, at once issued a statement to the effect that his Government had no knowledge of these documents, which he stigmatised as forgeries perpetrated by members of the Tsarist party to bring the Soviet into bad odour abroad. But Comrade Bron was removed from the Amtorg, and is now the head of the Soviet Trade Delegation in London. Possibly Communist activities will be somewhat restrained in the United States for a while as a result of Whalen's disclosures, but the Profintern (Red Trade Union International) has decided to organise a revolutionary Miners' Union in Canada to foment the symptoms of discontent observed in the mines of Nova Scotia. Its immediate task is to sap the power of the American and Canadian Miners' Unions by the formation of cells within them.

In China the Soviet's agents are particularly active, but for a time, at least, their operations have been checked in the Treaty Port of Shanghai, where police counterspies succeeded in raiding an important Communist centre. This was found in a house supposed to be the headquarters of a Chinese philanthropic society, where a number of truncheons, clubs, empty bottles and bags of lime were discovered. The plan was to create a diversion by staging a labour demon-

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stration in another part of the town while the comrades sallied forth in small parties to club isolated policemen and seize their weapons. These storm-troops were chosen from among the workers as the result of careful espionage by means of the cells, but in this case the counter-spies proved the more alert. The plot failed completely; 111 communists were arrested by the Settlement police and handed over to the Chinese authorities.

In most Continental states compulsory military service is still in force, and as the average conscript resents the period that he is torn away from his home, military cells are potent instruments of Communist propaganda. From the ranks of the dissatisfied there is no lack of recruits. In the French army such cells are numerous, and their organisation ensures the utmost efficiency.

The military cell differs from the industrial cell in several respects because of the impermanency of its component parts. The workman in the factory may pass many years in the same locality, whereas the soldier of a military cell returns to civilian life as soon as his period of service is over. There are consequently two types of cells, the first of which is a voluntary coalition of two or three former members of Communist associations who have been summoned to the colours. During their service they distribute among their comrades the pamphlets sent from headquarters or conveyed to them by fellow-workers; they arrange for secret meetings and discussions between themselves at regular periods and report to the heads of their party any noteworthy occurrence in the barracks. Little else is expected of them, and no great importance is attached to their activities.

The second and more dangerous type of military cell is that formed by the direct efforts of professional

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agents employed by Moscow, and the procedure is as follows :

After due investigation the Soviet's Intelligence Service decides to install a cell of a permanent nature in a regiment stationed in a garrison where there is much important military information to be obtained. A travelling agent is sent to visit the place and make preliminary investigations. He works independently of the local Communist Party, which Moscow does not always consider too trustworthy for such delicate operations, and in his bag will be found a number of anti-militarist tracts. He is generously provided with money, so that he expects to make something for himself out of the sum allowed for travelling expenses, which are calculated on a lavish scale.

Even on a first visit to the scene of operations he has no difficulty in finding his way about, for one garrison town is as like another as two peas. He prowls around the barracks and visits all the neighbouring streets, making special note of the public houses frequented by soldiers. In the course of the next few days he visits them and stands drinks to the landlord and regular inmates, after which he can be sure of a hearty welcome when he returns.

His second visit is timed for a Saturday or Sunday, when the soldiers, having leisure, are certain to be thirsty. He finds no difficulty in getting into conversation with them, and the coins in his pocket pay for the liquid refreshment they consume.

Our travelling agent is a good judge of character, who knows that the best recruits for his cells are to be found among the two extremes, the dull, sluggish mentalities and the nervous, excitable natures that are more intelligent than the average. The middle, normal intelligence is stony ground on

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which it is not worth his while to waste a minute of his time.

With the lack-wits his task is easy enough. He stands them drinks and suggests a game of cards, in which he takes care that they win his money. He then invites them to a cinema or music-hall, and by the end of the evening they are his firm friends and fruitful soil for communist propaganda. He also knows that soldiers are invariably short of money, wherefore his next procedure is to induce the prospective recruits to join the 'Soldiers' Benefit Society,' of which he represents himself to be the agent.

"Founded by time-expired men" he tells his listeners, "and from the funds formed by their subscriptions there'll be enough to pay you a decent weekly allowance for the rest of your stretch. Then when you get your civvies on again and find a job, you won't mind stumping up yourself to help the poor blighter who gets your bed in the barrack-room. Just mutual help, you see."

As a rule the soldier signs the form presented to him, and our spy has a new recruit for his cell. If the soldier hesitates, the agent generally manages to produce a letter of recommendation from one of his fellow-townsmen or some worker in the factory where he was last employed. Such documents are easy to procure, for as soon as the agent has enquired the soldier's home address and former employment, he gets in touch with the local communists, one of whom is ready to furnish a glowing testimonial to the advantages to be derived from the 'Soldiers' Benefit Society.'

With the super-intelligent type the agent has still easier work. Being a glib speaker, he finds an opportunity to discuss the stupidity of militarism, the brutality of officers and N.C.O.s, and the criminality

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of governments that hurl their citizens into the firing-line against fellow-workers with whom they have no quarrel. His eloquence carries conviction, and in a quiet moment he slips into the convert's pocket a few of the leaflets he has brought with him.

And thus the cell is formed. It soon becomes popular, because the conscripts look upon the agent as an enterprising fellow who sympathises with their grievances. A regular meeting-place is found, some back-room in a quiet street not too far away from the barracks and yet sufficiently sheltered from the prying eyes of the military police. As a precaution, this meeting-place is changed two or three times a year.

Every time the cell meets a packet of anti-militarist pamphlets and communist newspapers are sent down from headquarters for distribution among the members. Each takes a few to circulate among his messmates, and from hand to hand they glide surreptitiously.

The travelling agent's task is nearly done, but before he departs he must choose the most reliable of the new recruits to be his 'military correspondent.' Like the factory correspondent, this helper receives some small payment for his service, and his duties are to keep headquarters informed of every occurrence in the regiment. He supplies full details of its component units and their equipment, which statistics eventually find their way to No. 2 Lubianka, where they are checked and compared with the reports sent in by other correspondents until Moscow knows the precise number of rifles, boots, great coats and steel helmets owned by every foreign army.

The military correspondent also draws up reports on the characters and circumstances of his officers, so that when the order goes forth from Moscow that the plans of this or that fortress or the design of the

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latest machine gun must be obtained at all costs, the Soviet spy knows whom to approach. The files in the Lubianka tell him that Captain X of the Nth regiment is addicted to the bottle, while Lieutenant Y is spending large sums of money on a chorus lady. Sergeant Z has a large family and finds it difficult to make both ends meet, and Major V's gambling debts are notorious. To one of these the agent goes with his pockets full of Soviet gold, and in nine cases out of ten he succeeds in getting what he wants.

This cell system is similarly applied to the navies of the various nations. Its advantage is that when the correspondent completes his service and returns to civilian life, there are always plenty of candidates eager for his post and the money it brings to supplement the conscript's meagre pay. The civilians employed by military and naval arsenals as clerks and draughtsmen are also fruitful sources of information, for whom the Soviet agent has a different line of approach.

He is or poses as one of their fellow-countrymen, with no connection with Moscow. In conversations with them he frequently expresses abhorrence of the Soviet and all its ways, but he is an ardent Trade Unionist and anxious to see that the black-coated workers secure the same benefits as their fellows who toil with their hands. Very often he occupies a salaried post in the office of some Trade Union ignorant of his real activities.

In the interests of his Union he requires certain statistics and some few particulars about the conditions under which the clerks work. The questions he puts are so seemingly innocent that the patriotic draughtsman, anxious to keep a check on his tongue where his country's secrets are concerned, sees no harm in answering them. Ignorant of the danger, he is

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gradually led to discourse on the more intimate nature of his work ; his fellows join in, and finally an interesting report reaches the Soviet Embassy, to be forwarded to Moscow in the courier's bag.

Unlike the Intelligence agents of other nations, the Soviet spy is not called upon to match his unaided wits against the counterspies and police forces of the countries he visits, for in the members of its Communist associations and parties he has a host of allies to give him shelter and cover his tracks. A typical example of such a Soviet travelling agent is the Richard Schüller, who gave the French police so much trouble a few years ago.

Schüller was an Austrian subject who came to France for the nominal purpose of attending an anti-militarist conference held at Saint Denis under the auspices of the French Young Communist Association. But apparently the police had their eyes on him, and under the pretext of some irregularity in his passport two inspectors escorted him politely to the frontier. A handful of French Communists bade him a tearful farewell at the Gare du Nord when he entered the Brussels Express with his uniformed guardians.

At the frontier their duties ceased, but Schüller travelled to Brussels, and thence to Liège, where, after ascertaining that he was not shadowed by any plain-clothes policeman, he turned on his tracks. That same night he was on his way back to Paris, but he did not stay in the capital. He changed into a local train, which bore him to the little suburb of Bobigny, where a friend was waiting for him.

Schüller stayed a month at Bobigny, and his host was the mayor of the quiet *ban-lieu*, who smuggled a camp bed and other articles of furniture into a disused suite of rooms above the municipal offices.

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Every day he carried his guest's meals to him, and only one trusted friend shared the secret.

For the space of four weeks Schüller never left his lair, but time did not hang idly on his hands. He spent many hours poring over large-scale maps of France, and the reports of military correspondents, brought to him by his two friends, also gave him much food for thought. When at last he judged the storm created by his expulsion from France to have blown over, he thanked his host, marched to the station in broad daylight and returned to Paris, where he took a ticket for Lyons. For the next few months he travelled about France.

First the ports of Marseilles, Nice and Toulon attracted his attention, after which he turned westward to the Pyrenees, inspected the defences of the Spanish frontier and then visited the harbours of the Atlantic coast. He then spent some little time in the Channel ports, and then visited the garrison towns of north-east France and Alsace.

He returned to Paris and went to ground at Bezons, another suburb, where he lodged in the house of Provost, a member of the National Committee of the Young Communist Association who was afterwards found to have been concerned in the theft of certain military documents from the fortress of Metz. No doubt he had need of rest after his exertions, and possibly he desired temporary shelter from the unwelcome attentions of the French police. When he started on his travels once more, he took a zig-zag route that led him to Besançon, Bourges, Orleans, Montluçon, Nimes and many other towns of the interior. He also found time to visit the famous armament works of Creuzot. At some places he stayed only a few days to inspect existing cells, but in other places he devoted several weeks to the form-

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ation of new cells, each of which brought fresh flags and threads to the spider's web in 'Room No. 186' of the Lubianka.

From Paris he was supplied with a list of those members of the Communist Party of France whom experience had shown to be discreet individuals, likely to make good use of funds supplied for propaganda. To these he presented credentials endorsed by the Third International, and, being a persuasive speaker and a shrewd judge of human nature, he found no difficulty in persuading most of them to volunteer for special service that might bring them into conflict with their country's laws. He knew that martyrdom holds a fascination for certain excitable temperaments, while the rebel whose nature contains a strain of mysticism can easily be induced to regard himself as the torch destined to light the flame of liberty.

If Schüller encountered resistance from more sophisticated individuals, he fell back on Lenin's plea of moral necessity and Communism's struggle for the right to existence, at the same time dropping a few hints about the generous financial rewards lavished by Moscow on those who served her faithfully. There were certain risks, he admitted, but the worst that could befall a victim would be a few years of seclusion from the world as the state's involuntary guest. But such inconveniences were always outweighed by the publicity created for the sufferer, who after his release might expect an easy, but well-paid, post in the party's organisation that would permanently banish the worries of the daily struggle for existence and ultimately lead to a seat in Parliament.

Schüller spent a lot of money, but formed numerous cells and established residential agents all over France. Then, after a short rest at another Parisian suburb, he set out on tour once more to test the operation of the

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machinery he had set in motion. This time he took a camera with him, and at certain places of strategic importance he developed a passion for amateur photography.

By now the forces of the Sûreté were on his tracks, but with the assistance of the many allies he found on his circuit he succeeded in eluding the police, though not all his friends were so fortunate. Schüller escaped out of France just in time, consoling himself with the reflection that they would suffer in a good cause.

His personality was now, however, too well known for him to attempt to return to France and as his native country was not over-anxious to see him again, he remained for a while with friends in Germany. Probably the German police were somewhat too inquisitive about him, for he eventually made his way to Russia, where he now directs the activities of the Young Communist Associations from a luxurious office in the Kremlin.

But though some of his associates have been arrested (a military cell was brought to light at Mulhouse and several nests of spies broken up as a result of the attention paid to the Soviet's Commercial Mission in Paris after the disclosures obtained from the raid on the Arcos offices in London), far too many remain at large for the comfort of the French Government. The French colonies are also scenes of Communist activities, for not long ago there was a mutiny among the Annamese troops of Indo-China, which came as a complete surprise to the Authorities. When it was suppressed, investigations proved it to have been caused by spies ensconced in military cells.

The same process goes on in the South American states, for since the opening lines of this chapter were penned, the daily press has reported the discovery of naval cells on board the Brazilian warship "Minas

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Geraes." Twenty-three sailors were arrested for being in possession of Communist literature, which was found on them as the result of an enquiry following a boiler explosion and, a week later, a serious outbreak of fire on board. The causes of these 'accidents' were at first unfathomable, but subsequent investigation brought to light a flourishing naval cell.

The German army has been recruited on a voluntary basis ever since the Treaty of Versailles, but is none the less subject to the subversive influence of the red cells. For some considerable time Neu-Ruppin, in Prussia, was the scene of intense activity, leaflets being constantly found in odd corners of the barracks and sometimes posted up on the walls. The military police applied to Berlin for detectives, who traced the literature to a secret Communist printing press, while a non-commissioned officer was found to be acting as military correspondent for the Russian Intelligence Service. Soon afterwards another secret printing press was discovered to be turning out pamphlets for circulation among the personnel of the Reichswehr and police force. Five persons were arrested, one of whom was a member of the Soviet Trade Delegation.

Dangerous is the path of the amateur counterspy who imagines that by joining a patriotic association he can combat the secret operations of the Red Forces. If he is too zealous or too efficient, his prowess is reported to Moscow, where it is soon decided to quench his ardour for ever. The residential agents receive their instructions and act upon them.

Such a fate befell the student, Horst Wessel, a young Berliner who had risen to prominence in the National Socialist Movement. For some time he was a marked man, and was at last induced to walk into the trap laid for him by taking rooms in the house of

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a landlady whose husband was a secret agent of the Red Forces. Wessel's murder was systematically planned, and on a January evening fifteen persons set out for his address. One of the party, a young girl, went up to ascertain whether he was at home and admitted the other fourteen, who clustered about the doorway while two of their number entered Wessel's room and shot him in cold blood. The student survived, but died in hospital six weeks later after giving the police information that ultimately led to the arrest of eight of the assassins.

Reorganised by the G.P.U., the Russian Intelligence Service watches political developments in every country. In February last the Rumanian police arrested a certain Alexei Karamanoff, who proved to be a courier carrying reports from Bucharest to the G.P.U. bureau at Odessa. In the hope of a lighter sentence Karamanoff turned informer and denounced Constantine Tibiacu, a high official in the Bucharest police force, as chief of the G.P.U.'s Secret Service in Rumania. Tibiacu was arrested along with his wife and several accomplices, although his smartest assistant, Mihail Stenhaus, received timely warning and fled into Russia. The affair caused a great sensation in the Rumanian capital, where Tibiacu and his wife had enjoyed a high position in local society, but at his trial evidence was furnished that he had supplied the G.P.U. with political information for a considerable time. He received ten years imprisonment, and the same sentence was meted out to Stenhaus, who was tried 'in contumacia,' while the others received five years apiece.

The British army and navy are not free from the attentions of red agents, but so far their efforts do not appear to have been too successful. From time to time the newspapers report proceedings at police-

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courts where members of the Communist Party of Great Britain have been arrested for attempting to distribute literature to soldiers entering or leaving barracks, but the latter appear to have resented such endeavours to convert them to Communism, with the result that the distributors were arrested for creating disturbances. Nevertheless it is unpleasant to learn that a Communist tract entitled "The Sailors' and Marines' Programme" boasts openly in its introductory paragraph that it has circulated 'in every important naval barracks in the country and on most of the bigger ships.'

But in India the secret agents of the Soviet are alert to seize any chance of sowing disaffection in the native army. Among the methods they employ are attempts to create cells within the regiments by the enlistment of seditionists under false pretences, and it was entirely due to the operations of such a cell that two platoons of the 18th Royal Garhwal Rifles refused to fire on the mobs during the recent riotous outbreak at Peshawar.

The incidents related in this chapter have taken place within the last few years, and it will be noted that they range from Great Britain to France, Germany, Rumania, Canada, the United States, Brazil, China, Indo-China and India. Truly the red spider in No. 2, Lubyanka, spins a wide web.

CHAPTER XVI

RUSSIA, LAND OF STRANGE MYSTERIES

When the clocks struck eleven on the morning of November 11th, 1918, and the guns posted along the line running from the North Sea to the Swiss Frontier were stilled for ever, the struggle between Reds and Whites in Russia still raged furiously. The campaigns waged by Denikin, Judenitch, Koltchak and Wrangel against the Soviet Government gave many Russians on both sides the opportunity to demonstrate the talents for espionage ingrained in their nature.

In the cause of the counter-revolutionaries Sydney Reilly, one of the most daring agents of Britain's Intelligence Service, eventually met the death he had so long wooed. It is said that Reilly's adventurous career was occasioned by an unfortunate love affair shortly after he left Oxford, the maiden who captivated his heart being a society beauty. But her father gave the penniless suitor short shrift, and although the lovers vowed eternal constancy, it was not long before the lady succumbed to the attentions of a wealthy peer. She forgot poor Reilly, who remained inconsolable, and in due course he found his way into the Intelligence Service, where he volunteered for all the specially dangerous missions.

He was also attracted by the hazardous delights of pre-war aviation, and in 1910 he constructed the first aerodrome in Russia, utilising the opportunity to

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learn to speak the difficult Russian language without an accent. He acquired so thorough a knowledge of Russian manners and customs that he had no difficulty in passing himself off as a native, and these gifts stood him in good stead during the war when he accompanied a British air-squadron to Poland and won the D.S.O. after some desperate encounters with German pilots, from which, as usual, he emerged unscathed. He seemed to be endowed with immortality by some ironic god.

After the Russian Revolution Reilly's aviation career came to an end, but orders from London kept him in Russia when the squadron departed. For a while he was placed at Kerenski's disposal; he assumed Russian dress, loudly aired his communistic opinions and as 'Comrade Relinski' secured an appointment to one of the numerous revolutionary committees. Gradually he worked his way up to a high post, which gave him much opportunity to acquire valuable information.

This he remitted to London, but at last he fell under suspicion. His courier was traced and intercepted by Soviet agents, and Comrade Relinski was summarily condemned to death. But his luck still held good, for a few hours before the time fixed for his execution he escaped in the disguise of a monk and made his way into Latvia, whence he returned to London. He made a detailed report to his superiors, to whom he told many strange tales of his experiences in the Red Land; then, for six months, he enjoyed a well-earned rest.

But in Russia there was still work for him to do; two trusted agents of the Intelligence Service lay rotting in a Soviet prison, and it was thought that Reilly's marvellous knowledge of the country and its inhabitants might enable him to contrive their escape.

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He accepted the mission, which he carried through successfully by an audacious piece of bluff; disguised as a 'People's Commissioner,' he marched boldly into their prison and interviewed the governor, representing himself in dictatorial tones as charged by the highest authorities to convey the two captives to an unknown destination. Then, after a series of hairs-breadth escapes, he escorted them across the frontier.

Yet no man's luck holds good for ever. The Soviet Government put a price on Reilly's head, and one day they paid it. The manner of his death is unknown, for although he was announced to have been executed somewhere in the neighbourhood of Lake Ala-Kul, no details came to hand. Reilly's death merely added another to the long list of British Intelligence agents who have found nameless graves.

In the conflict between Reds and Whites espionage played an important role, and neither side found difficulty in procuring capable agents to undertake dangerous missions. They performed their duties zealously under conditions that would have appalled anyone but the most hardened fanatic, for those who were caught had more than their lives to lose. Under the laws of war death is the detected spy's penalty, but it comes swiftly and mercifully from the sure bullets of a dozen rifles; the spy, however, who fell into the hands of either Whites or Reds could reckon on many hours of protracted torture before his release came. Count Ungern-Sternburg, the White leader who made a long stand against the Bolsheviks in Mongolia, condemned all convicted spies to be beaten to death with iron rods, and other commanders had their own favoured methods of ensuring a lingering doom.

One of the most daring spies of this period was

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the *ci-devant* Imperial Russian Councillor Orloff, who was sentenced to imprisonment for forgery in Berlin not so long ago, his trial being followed by a series of unpleasant revelations. The Orloff case created a stir in Germany that will long be remembered.

During his pre-war career in Russia Orloff did not participate personally in any affairs of espionage, although he was constantly in touch with officials of the political police. Born of poor parents, he had studied law and entered government service after passing his examinations. Later he was called up as a reserve officer and took part in the Russo-Japanese war, after which he obtained a magisterial post in St. Petersburg. He attracted notice by the ability with which he handled a forgery case, and his promotion was thereafter rapid, so that in 1917 he sat on the judicial bench for the secret trials of political offenders. All the resources of the Okhrana were at his disposal; Lenin, Trotsky and other revolutionaries who to-day occupy high posts in the Soviet Government, appeared at his bar, and he was instrumental in sending many of them to the penal settlements of Siberia. Practically every political conspiracy detected in the seven years preceding the Revolution came under his observation, so that he had ample opportunity to study the ramifications of political espionage and counter-espionage in his country. His name was a by-word with the revolutionaries, many of whom he had sentenced to death, and it was therefore quite natural for the Soviet authorities to place a price on his head as soon as they seized the reins of power.

But Orloff escaped, and even found ways and means to make a choice selection of documents from his secret archives. This precious package he carried about with him in all his wanderings, until at last he

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succeeded in reaching the headquarters of General Denikin, where he was welcomed with open arms.

At that period the White Forces were nearing Moscow. Orloff placed his skill and experience at their disposal and was nominated public prosecutor of a courtmartial that sat permanently to try the numerous Bolshevik spies falling into Denikin's hands. Hundreds of them he convicted and condemned to an execution of lingering torture, of which beating to death with the knout was the mildest form. At Denikin's request he subsequently resigned this post and undertook a special mission to the Bolshevik headquarters to collect information and procure the escape of certain counter-revolutionaries held fast in the prisons of Petrograd and Moscow. He also undertook to organise a staff of residential agents in these two cities to supply the White general with regular reports.

Under the name of Orlinski he obtained the post of a minor prison official in Petrograd, where he was charged with the duty of spying on counter-revolutionaries awaiting trial. He did his work so efficiently that he soon attracted the notice of his superiors and received more responsible missions. He was enrolled as a member of the Tcheka, whose chiefs soon learnt to value his undoubted abilities. Then he suddenly disappeared, and later was found gracing his old post of public prosecutor to Denikin's permanent court-martial, where the experience he acquired in Soviet service stood him in good stead. No Bolshevik arraigned by him ever escaped his doom.

What General Denikin did not learn till later was the fact that when Orloff masqueraded as Orlinski and an officer of the Tcheka he never made the slightest effort to save any of the counter-revolutionaries he promised to succour. On the contrary, he used his

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skill to bring their guilt home to his Red masters and hunted down suspects with as much relish and enthusiasm as any genuine Bolshevik. In fact, he did not really seem to mind for which side he worked as long as he was allowed to employ his diabolical ingenuity to convict and condemn.

After Denikin retired, defeated, from the field, Orloff managed to escape from Russia and spent some years in London and Paris, where he appears to have spied for both parties. For a short time he was employed as a cook in the Soviet Embassy in London, while later he was attached to the staff of the Grand Duke Nicholas, after whose death he drifted to Berlin.

When arrested, he was in the employment of a private espionage bureau maintained by several German officials, and at his trial it came out that, unknown to the police authorities, a number of Civil Servants of high position had combined to form their own Intelligence Service. The men who paid for it spied on their superiors, their subordinates, one another and the general public. They pulled strings at home and abroad and found many opportunities to mould events in a fashion profitable to themselves. Orloff was the expert on Russian affairs in one of these establishments, where his duties mainly consisted of procuring official papers that might give information on the Soviet's foreign policy and Russo-German commercial affairs. He found it hard to acquire all the documents his employers needed, and finally resorted to forgery to satisfy their insatiable demands. At first he contrived to bamboozle them, but when he was rash enough to offer some of his forgeries to an American journalist in search of a scoop, he overreached himself and was handed over to the police.

Of the revelations consequent on his trial the feature most puzzling to the public was the fact that all the

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heads of these espionage bureaus and most of the agents they employed were Russians. But those who know Russia will evince no surprise, for they are aware that the inhabitants of the land where a secret political police has spied on the private lives of all citizens for centuries must inevitably be so saturated with the spirit of espionage that when the course of events has driven any Russian forth to earn his bread in a strange country it is only natural for him to turn to the talent that is second nature to all of his race.

From Russia comes yet another tale, which is included in this volume with some hesitation because of the difficulty of checking its amazing details. As narrated, it sounds too incredible for belief, but so many incredible things have happened in that country that it is quite feasible. If true, it supplies the explanation for certain events that puzzled many people during the Russo-Japanese war.

The year 1918, the last year of the Great War, began with so many campaigns in progress in different parts of the world and ended in such a welter of confusion that few readers will be familiar with those events that took place in remoter European countries. In Russia much occurred that still remains wrapped in mystery.

But all will recollect that in October, 1918, the end of the long-drawn struggle seemed in sight. Bulgaria had sued for peace, Turkey was incapable of further resistance, the Austrian Empire begun to crumble and in the west the German armies were gradually being ousted from positions they had deemed impregnable.

In Russia, however, all was chaos. The Revolution had turned the ally of 1914 into the foe of 1918, and many Entente statesmen considered the Bolshevik a far deadlier enemy than the German. The Allies, unwisely as events showed, decided to intervene in Russian affairs, and while a British force was landed

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at Archangel, General Franchet d'Esperey, in command of the Allied armies of the Salonica front, received orders to embark his troops and proceed, escorted by a naval squadron, into the Black Sea via the Dardanelles and Bosphorus. His instructions were to seize Odessa and the neighbouring ports.

The General obeyed, but with grave misgivings. He knew that his forces were insufficient for the purpose and ill equipped to stand the rigours of a Russian winter ; he also knew that the men would grumble because they foresaw the end of the war and wanted to go home. Why, they reasoned, should they be ordered off to a new war in an unknown country when their comrades of the western front were returning to their families ? Those who knew a bit of history remembered how Napoleon, France's greatest general, was forced to retreat ignominiously from this vast, icy Russia, leaving behind him the bones of thousands of his soldiers to whiten its dreary plains. General Franchet d'Esperey had as little liking for this new campaign as his men, but he could only obey orders.

In November his army, reinforced with Polish and Serbian contingents, was in possession of a coast-line running from Odessa (where they found the remains of a Russian White Army under General Almazoff) to Sebastopol. Further eastward British troops, proceeding from a base in Persia, were marching on Baku, while somewhere in the north General Denikin's forces were supposed to be advancing on Moscow. Far away in distant Siberia was Admiral Koltchak with another White Army.

But all around them was a hostile population, frantically Red. Almost on the outskirts of Odessa lurked Bolshevik troops, whose spies entered the town nightly to post placards calling on the French

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conscripted proletariat to turn against their capitalist officers and reach hands to the Russian comrades. The French soldiers still wore the summer uniforms served out to them in Salonica, and there seemed little possibility of warmer clothing reaching them from France before the winter was over. Such was the invidious plight of the French Black Sea Expedition in November, 1918.

To counteract the Bolshevik propaganda the French established an Intelligence Department in some disused business premises in the Cathedral Square of Odessa, but unfortunately too little attention was paid to its *personel*. The staff did not possess the necessary qualities for special service of this kind; they were lacking in intuition and knowledge of human nature; their powers were limited, and the funds at their disposal meagre. The result was that the Odessa Intelligence Bureau soon became the butt of ridicule, while the Bolshevik propaganda grew daily more effective.

One day, however, an unknown lady, dressed in the latest fashion, passed through the doors of the office in the Cathedral Square and asked for an interview with its chief. Her name she gave as Countess Rogerski, the widow of a colonel in the Imperial Russian army.

"I have called on you as representative of a powerful association whose name I must not mention at present," she told the officer deputed to see her. "It has no headquarters, though its branches are everywhere, and it can give your army the aid of the most powerful secret forces the world has ever known. If you accept, the keys of Holy Russia are in your hands; if you wish it, Lenin and Trotsky shall come to Odessa to sue for peace. To us nothing is impossible."

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The officer stared in amazement at the lady, who extracted a cigarette from her jewelled case. His eyes plainly reflected his thoughts ; he was convinced that he was dealing with a lunatic.

" I think I have said enough," continued his visitor. " Kindly take me to your chief, General d'Anselme, who is the only person with whom I can discuss such important business. I quite understand your surprise, which is only natural, but we are able to give proofs to the right man.

" During the war," she resumed, after another pause, " you wasted millions of lives because we did not help you, but it is no use crying over spilt milk. I am not here to bemoan the past, but to discuss your country's future prospects."

Overborn by her insistence, the officer went to see his chief in an inner office. " Stark mad, I suppose," he concluded. " Shall I put her out, sir ? "

" Mad or not mad," muttered his superiors, " I shall have to see her. In our line of business, young man, it doesn't do to neglect any opening, no matter how silly it may seem. You never know where the truth lies." He went to the outer office and bowed formally to the Countess, who repeated the proposal she had made to his subordinate.

" If you say the word," she added, " the present masters of Russia shall beg for peace on their knees. But naturally we expect something in return, for France is a rich country that can afford to be generous with her benefactors."

The two men looked at one another dubiously ; this was the kind of hint they had received before, and they imagined they knew what would follow it.

" I can see that you do not realise the powers we possess " said the Countess. " We have done business with the British, German and Italian govern-

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ments on past occasions, and they were always satisfied with their bargains. We make a speciality of undertaking operations too delicate for any state to attempt, and more than once we have decided the issue of a war. As an example I can quote you the fate of Port Arthur, which, if you remember the events of the Russo-Japanese war, my countrymen considered impregnable. Go and tell your general that we handed Port Arthur over to the Japanese."

Her two listeners stared at her open-mouthed, for now they knew that they had been talking to a lunatic. But the elder man hesitated to pronounce the words of dismissal, for he remembered his advice to his subordinate: "In our line of business it doesn't do to neglect any opening, no matter how silly it may seem. You never know where truth lies." And even a lunatic's mouth might utter words of truth. He therefore told his visitor that he would report her proposals to the General, and asked her to call again the following day.

Five officers sat in the room into which Countess Rogerski was ushered when she came to keep her appointment. Once more she asked for General d'Anselme, declaring that she had no power to treat with his subordinates, however capable they might be. But the colonel who was their spokesman replied with some acerbity that it was impossible to trespass on his chief's time unless he furnished some proof that this mysterious association was as powerful as it claimed to be. He reminded the Countess that she claimed to have brought about the fall of Port Arthur; could she give him any evidence that she and her friends were responsible for the surrender of the fortress to the Japanese? If she convinced him on that point, the General would naturally be interested, if not. . . . An eloquent shrug of the shoulders completed his sentence.

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Stung to the quick by these doubts of her good faith, Countess Rogerski bade the five officers listen to what she could tell them. Her association, she declared, sent her to Shanghai in the autumn of 1904 to interview a Japanese prince of the royal blood, who was the head of his country's Intelligence Service.

She found him in a despondent mood, for in spite of their early successes the Japanese were finding the task of subduing the Russian bear harder than they originally expected. For nearly a year General Nogi, commanding the combined land and sea forces of the Rising Sun, had besieged Port Arthur, but still the fortress held out. All Japanese attacks had been repulsed with heavy losses, and as long as General Stessel's flag still waved over the citadel, Russia's hopes of ultimate victory were justified.

"Port Arthur is yours if you will pay the price" the Countess had told her host, who, without further ado, asked politely what that price might be. But the sum she demanded represented about three million pounds of English money, and the Japanese prince demurred. His country, he protested, was poor, and the war had drained its exchequer. It was impossible to find so much money.

"Very well" the Countess replied, "I must go to the Russians, who are not the gentlemen to haggle over such a trifle."

The prince protested again, and for a while they argued. But finally he asked his fair visitor how she proposed to keep her share of the bargain if a special effort was made to raise the money.

She told him that her association had its own secret agents inside Port Arthur; at a word from her the plans of the batteries and minefields would be handed over to General Nogi. Armed with this vital inform-

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ation the Japanese commander could launch an attack that would secure him the key positions to the fortress with trifling losses.

Several days elapsed before the bargain was sealed, and there was a further delay while they haggled about the method in which payment was to be made. But at last everything was settled, the prince agreeing on his country's behalf that the money should be paid in six yearly instalments.

"Port Arthur fell," said the Countess, "but the yellow monkeys swindled us. They paid the first two instalments and then stole our copies of the agreement. Their spies found where we kept those papers and robbed us. The London bank on which we had our drafts refused to make further payments because we could not produce our authorisation to receive them. We were swindled, but we learnt our lesson, so that now we always ask for payment in advance for our services. The price of our help is 200 million gold francs, a trifle for your country, which will spend ten times as much if you refuse our help. Furthermore, you will have no successes to show for this extra expense, but if you agree to do business, I will bring you the heads of Lenin and Trotsky and the keys of the Kremlin."

So far the French officers had heard her without interruption, but now the old colonel spoke:

"Madame, you are a Russian, but if it is true that you handed over Port Arthur to the Japanese, then you are a traitor to your country."

The Countess smiled sarcastically. "Yes, I was born in Russia" she replied, "but I am a member of the organisation known as the Universal League of International Spies. We cannot be bound by narrow conceptions of patriotism, for our ranks contain men and women of all races. We serve faithfully

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the state that pays us. I shall call again this time to-morrow."

There was nothing more to be said. The officers rose and bowed; the Countess took her leave. But when she had departed, all shook their heads. The horrors of the Revolution had turned her brain, they decided, and it was useless to waste the General's time with such a mares-nest.

Great was Countess Rogerski's anger when on the following day the young officer who had first interviewed her intimated politely that his chief was unable to entertain her proposal.

"The Bolsheviks are not such fools as you French" she hissed at him, "they know when they get value for their money. You will be sorry for the way you treated me when your regiments rise in mutiny and your warships hoist the red flag. In six months you will be bundled out of Odessa, neck and crop."

The door slammed behind her, and the French Intelligence Service made no attempt to trace her subsequent movements. What was the use, they reasoned, of wasting further time on a lunatic. Let her go to the Bolsheviks if she would, and if they were fools enough to believe her, they deserved all they got.

Whether Countess Rogerski's Universal League of International Spies possessed the power she attributed to it or whether she was merely a woman demented by some terrible episode of the Revolution will probably remain unknown. But the fact remains that the disasters she had foretold when she flounced out of the French Intelligence Service's office in Odessa were almost literally fulfilled.

The soldiers of the expeditionary force shivered in their thin cotton clothing when the thermometer fell below zero, and a ship carrying a consignment

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of warm garments and medical stores sank mysteriously with its precious cargo. The sick and wounded died by hundreds. Finally two regiments under orders to march into the interior succumbed to Bolshevik propaganda and refused to leave Odessa.

At Kherson another regiment mutinied and paraded the streets to the strains of the International. The civil population joined them; all adherents of the Tsarist cause were massacred, together with a number of French officers. At Sebastopol Admiral Amet ordered the fleet to open fire on the Bolshevik troops who had fought their way into the town, but his crews mutinied. On his flagship, the *Jean-Bart*, the tricolour was hauled down to be replaced by the red flag of Russia.

For several days the Admiral's life was in danger, but he contrived to temporise with the mutineers until Admiral Seymour sent a squadron from the Dardenelles to restore order, and eventually the French fleet steamed down to Constantinople under the guns of British warships, whose commanders had instructions to open fire at the first sign of disobedience. The Black Sea Mutiny remains an unsavoury episode which Frenchmen are still reluctant to discuss.

As for the land forces, it was at last realised that their plight was hopeless. The only possible course was to negotiate with the Bolsheviks so as to ensure a bloodless retreat. Admiral Amet had restored order on board his own flagship, on board of which he received the delegates of the victorious Reds. Terms were arranged, but when the last French vessel eventually left Sebastopol, heartrending scenes took place. Every inch of deck space was occupied by refugees, supporters of Tsarism fleeing from the Bolshevik vengeance. Around the gangways men fought and trampled one another for the last places. Before the

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smoke from the French funnels had disappeared from the horizon, the massacre begun.

Thus ended the ill-fated expedition to the Black Sea, which cost so much in lives and treasure. How far the Countess Rogerski and her Universal League of International Spies were responsible for its failure, it is hard to say, for the half-starved, shivering soldiers who embarked so unwillingly might have succumbed to Bolshevist propaganda without such intervention. Their sins may be laid at the doors of their rulers in Paris who sent them on this wild errand.

But in confirmation of Countess Rogerski's boast, it must be remembered that Port Arthur's fall was untimely. In the fortress the Japanese found stores and ammunition sufficient to last the defenders for another three months, and General Nogi was frankly puzzled when he took stock of these resources. After the conclusion of peace General Stessel was summoned to explain his conduct before a courtmartial as soon as he returned to Russia.

But its findings were never given to the world, so that we have no explanation of the motives that prompted him to yield the strong fortress he could have held for another three months. He escaped with a reprimand, much to the astonishment of the Russian public.

Was Countess Rogerski's influence powerful enough to insist on a condonation of some act of treachery she had instigated?

It seems incredible, but so many incredible things have happened in Russia, and truth is often stranger than fiction.

